

Hafa Adai!

House bipartisan bill allots \$1.3M for retiree bonuses. **PAGE 3**  
NMHC to roll out supplemental rental assistance program. **PAGE 6**

\$1

# Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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## Man stabbed dead on New Year's Day

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

As the CNMI welcomed the New Year, it also saw its first homicide after an altercation between two couples resulted in the fatal stabbing of one of the men involved.



Kong



Yi

Kong LingYang, 34, is currently facing charges of second-degree murder, assault with a dangerous weapon, and assault and battery without the possibility of posting bail after allegedly fatally stabbing Li SongZhi multiple times, killing him last Jan. 1.

See MAN on Page 4

## Impeachment resolution is sent to full House for action

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Members of the House of Representatives Special Investigating Committee on Impeachment unanimously voted at their first meeting yesterday to send to the full House for action a House resolution that impeaches Gov. Ralph DLG Torres for alleged commission of felonies, corruption, and



Torres



Attao



Sablan

negligence.

With the affirmative votes, committee chair Rep. Blas

See HOUSE on Page 4

### AT A GLANCE

As of 5:10pm, Jan. 4, 2021

#### VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Fully Vaccinated: **95.7%**

Days since last community transmission **2**

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	36,789
Fully Vaccinated:	35,130
Moderna	
Initiated:	5,279
Fully Vaccinated:	4,980
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	1,117

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	19,689	210	19,899
Recovered	19,006	0	19,006
Active	410	210	620
Deaths	273	0	273

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	3,297	37	3,334
Traced via Travel Screening	320	7	327
Traced via Community Screening	2,977	30	3,007
Deaths	18	0	18

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., <https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/>



### 'DISTINCTIVE SMELL'

Police officers peer out over the edge Suicide Cliff in Marpi yesterday morning in response to a call about an unusual smell coming from the area. A concerned citizen called the police to report a suspicious stench in the area and four police cars showed up and conducted a preliminary search. They were talking about returning with a drone or a few of the rescue crew to rappel over the edge to find what the source of the distinctive odor is. One of the officers climbed out to see what was below the overlook.

MARK FARMER

### OF 15 COVID-RELATED DEATHS SINCE OCT. 28:

## 9 unvaxxed, 5 fully vaxxed, 1 partially vaxxed

By JOSHUA SANTOS  
joshua\_santos@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

» **37 new cases**

Of the 15 COVID-19-related

deaths that the CNMI has had since Oct. 28, 2021, nine were

unvaccinated individuals, while one was only partially vaccinated; the other five were all fully vaccinated. None of

them, though, had received a booster dose.

In a news release on Monday  
See VAXXED on Page 4

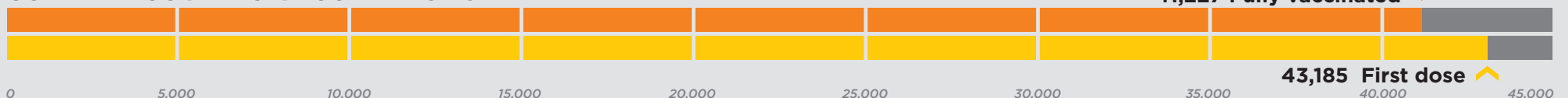
### COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

#### LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

### CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS



43,185 First dose

Source: [vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/](https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/)

### INSIDE



#### LOCAL

Lucio Saures and Dante Yumul are NMTC's Staff of the Year and Instructor of the Year.

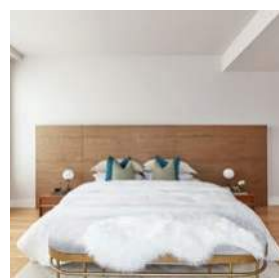
PAGE 2



#### BUSINESS

The New York attorney general has subpoenaed Donald Trump and his two eldest children.

PAGE 11



#### GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Headboards these days can provide an opportunity for creativity and even saving space.

PAGE 14



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# Local

## Saures, Yumul are NMTech's 2021 Staff and Instructor of the Year

By JOSHUA SANTOS  
joshua\_santos@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

For the first time since it became the Northern Marianas Technical Institute, NMTech recently named its Staff of the Year and Instructor of the Year for 2021, the recipients being facility manager Lucio Saures and automotive technology instructor Dante Yumul.

structor Dante Yumul.

Saures, who has worked at NMTech for 11 years now, credits the award to doing his best every day, and working hard to “get projects completed and do what the facility needs so we can run a smooth operation every day.”

Saures thanked his colleagues and the NMTech

administration for the recognition, and said that receiving the award was a “good surprise.”

“I feel really appreciated by my coworkers. Thank you NMTech for recognizing the work I put in every day,” he said.

Before NMTech, Saures told *Saipan Tribune* that he



From left: Northern Marianas Technical Institute facility manager Lucio Saures, NMTech chief executive officer Jodina Attao, and automotive technology instructor Dante Yumul share a photo together at Attao's office last week.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

worked at Auto Marine Shop, where he coordinated beach activities for tourists.

When asked about what he's done in 2021 to earn him the Instructor of the Year plum, Yumul said he's a “doer” and prides himself on teaching automotive students the “right and correct way of doing things” and inspiring students “to do the best they can in any which way they are capable.” Yumul added that he helps around the campus with projects as well.

Yumul also expressed his gratitude for the award. “I am thankful for my colleagues for nominating me; I am grateful for the recognition. I like to have good vibes and [a] positive attitude every

day,” he said.

Yumul has been with NMTech for 13 years. Before becoming an instructor, Yumul told *Saipan Tribune* that he previously ran an automotive shop and family-owned hardware store, worked as a diesel mechanic at the former Marpi landfill, managed Naked Fish Bar & Grill, and was a drummer at Godfather's Bar.

When sought for comments yesterday, NMTech chief executive officer Jodina Attao praised both men for their contributions to NMTech.

She described Saures as a humble person that is “a crucial part of NMTech's daily operations” who is always the “first one at work and the last to leave.”

“[Saures] mentioned once that NMTech helped him at a time [when] he needed it the most, and years later, he is still here serving the community in the humblest of ways. He is very deserving of this award, and the votes from other staff can speak for itself,” she said.

Attao described Yumul as an energetic go-getter who “walks around daily with a smile on his face, [shares] positive vibes, and gets along with pretty much anyone in his path.” She added that Yumul's willingness to learn new things every day translates into his teaching style, which Attao said brings positive and constructive energy to Yumul's classroom environment.

## NMC receives favorable audit opinion

By JOSHUA SANTOS  
joshua\_santos@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

For the 14th consecutive year, the Northern Marianas College received a favorable audit opinion on its financial statements, this time for fiscal year 2020. The independent audit was prepared by the accounting firm Burger Comer Magliari.

In an email to *Saipan Tribune* yesterday, NMC said there were no unresolved audit findings and questioned costs from previous audits of the college, and added that NMC continues to be designated as a “low risk” auditee by independent auditors.

NMC said the “low risk” designation “means less administrative burden for the institution in applying for and administering grants, fewer audit requirements, and higher confidence in the institution by federal agencies and the community.”

Additionally, Burger Comer Magliari found no material weaknesses and no questioned costs. According to an online definition, a material weakness is reported by an auditor when one or more of a company's activities, rules, and processes designed to prevent inaccuracies in financial reporting and improve efficiency are ineffective.

Also according to an online definition, a “questioned cost” is reported by an auditor when an expenditure appears to violate a provision of a law, regulation, contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or other agreement or document governing the expenditure of funds.

Burger Comer Magliari, however, reported findings related to the timely processing of employees' contract renewal paperwork. NMC said yesterday that it has since “identified action items to address these findings and will

continue to strengthen its procedures to avoid delays in processing the documents for these renewals.”

NMC's email included comments on the audit from NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero, who lauded the college's Finance Office and other departments for “their diligence and strict adherence to internal controls and sound financial management.”

The email also said that, according to NMC chief financial officer David Attao, recommendations were made by the independent auditors to help improve NMC's finance and procurement procedures. Regarding these recommendations, NMC said it is “committed to and has taken appropriate measures for continuous improvement.”

A copy of NMC's financial audit has been transmitted to the Office of the Public Auditor and all other required entities.

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# House bipartisan bill allots \$1.3M for retiree bonuses

Rep. Donald Manglona (Ind-Saipan) has pre-filed a bipartisan bill to allocate \$1.3 million in local funds as a bonus

for government retirees from clearly identified sources, including provisions that were originally passed by both the

House of Representatives and the Senate but line-item vetoed by the governor.

“This bonus is not only a



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the CNMI House of Representatives sign bipartisan legislation in the House chamber to fund bonuses for the CNMI retirees and propose local stimulus initiatives.

## House joint resolution endorses a new stimulus plan, expanded premium pay

Rep. Christina Sablan (D-Saipan) has introduced a bipartisan House joint resolution to strongly encourage and endorse the issuance of a new local stimulus payment of \$500 per resident and \$500 per dependent. Eligibility guidelines would remain the same as the previous federal stimulus packages; households that meet adjusted gross income guidelines of up to \$75,000 per individual or \$150,000 for married couples.

The joint resolution strongly urges the new local economic impact payment to be made directly to qualified households instead of limiting spending options to local vendors that accepted Visa debit cards, as with the previous local stimulus distribution.

“This stimulus package is meant to provide recipients with the flexibility and freedom to choose how they wish to apply these funds, expand the pool of small businesses that will benefit from increased consumer spending, and reduce overhead costs of administration,” Sablan said, who chairs the House Health and Welfare Committee. “There are many other individuals and families throughout the Commonwealth who are in serious need of financial relief, including thousands of Commonwealth residents who remain unemployed or underemployed and still await long-overdue payments of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and Commonwealth Covid-19 Emergency Rental Assistance.”

### Premium pay expansion

The joint resolution also proposes to expand the scope of the premium pay “bonuses” of \$1,000 and \$5,000 to include other essential workers

throughout the government, including autonomous agencies such as the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., as well as essential workers in the private sectors.

Gov. Ralph DLG.Torres previously announced his plan to distribute premium pay to certain frontline government employees of the Executive Branch, funded by the American Rescue Plan Act.

“Throughout the pandemic, our community was served by front-liners in the public and private sectors who risked their well-being and the well-being of their friends and family when they reported to work. They overcame their fears through a sense of

duty to our community and now it is our responsibility to acknowledge their service,” Sablan said.

The joint resolution is co-sponsored by House Speaker Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), vice speaker Blas Jonathan Attao (R-Saipan), floor leader Ralph Yumul (R-Saipan), and Reps. Celina Babauta (D-Saipan), Vicente Camacho (D-Saipan), Joel Camacho (R-Saipan), Edwin Propst (D-Saipan), Corina Magofna (D-Saipan), John Paul Sablan (R-Saipan), Richard Lizama (D-Saipan), Donald Manglona (Ind-Rota), Leila Staffler (D-Saipan), and Denita Yangetmai (D-Saipan). (PR)

symbol of our respect and admiration for our retirees, it also serves as an example of how to honor the commitment of those who served our community as government employees by doing things the right way,” said Manglona, who chairs the House Ways and Means Committee.

CNMI retirees were initially promised bonus payments from the Executive Branch when Gov. Ralph DLG.Torres announced his plan for a Christmas bonus in a December 2021 media briefing. The Planning and Budgeting Act, Title 1, Section 7402 of the Commonwealth Code provides the governor 25% reprogramming authority. As the governor had not reported to the Legislature he reached or exceeded these

limits, the amount of \$1.3 million fell well within the scope of the governor’s reprogramming powers.

“The governor should not have promised the retirees a bonus without identifying the source of the funding. While he placed the blame on the House leadership for not acting on Senate Joint Resolution 22-05, we identified the specific business units and specific dollar amounts to fund the bonus for our retirees,” Manglona said. “Simply put, doing things the proper way takes longer. Our local funding levels are at the lowest they’ve been since the Trust Territory times and fiscal responsibility is especially crucial now more than ever.”

The bill will be introduced and voted upon in the next House session and sent to the Senate for approval. House

Speaker Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) is expected to call a session next week.

The bill is co-sponsored by Villagomez, vice speaker Blas Jonathan Attao (R-Saipan), floor leader Ralph Yumul (R-Saipan), and Reps. Celina Babauta (D-Saipan), Vicente Camacho (D-Saipan), Joel Camacho (R-Saipan), Edwin Propst (D-Saipan), Corina Magofna (D-Saipan), Christina Sablan (D-Saipan), John Paul Sablan (R-Saipan), Richard Lizama (D-Saipan), Leila Staffler (D-Saipan), and Denita Yangetmai (D-Saipan). (PR)

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Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp | Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.net

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD funds.

### COMBINED NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
Northern Marianas Housing Corporation  
Saipan, MP 96950 Tel: (670) 234-9447/6866

This notice shall satisfy the above-cited two separate but related procedural notification requirements.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or after January 13, 2022, the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Honolulu Field Office, for the release of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (PL 93-383), as amended, to undertake the following projects and purposes in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands:

Project Activity/Type:	Purpose:	Location:	Total Project Cost:
Tinian Children Park Improvement Project	Revitalize and enhance the park to be accessible for the entire community of Tinian for recreational purposes	San, Jose Tinian	\$275,000.00

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has determined that the above-listed projects will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation Central Office in Garapan, Saipan and may be examined or copied during regular work hours, Monday through Friday except CNMI or Austerity Holidays, from 7:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group or agency disagreeing with this determination or wishing to comment on the projects may submit written comments to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 or direct delivery to the central office in Garapan, Saipan. All comments received by **January 12, 2022, 4:30 p.m.**, will be considered by the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Commentors should specify which part of this Notice they are addressing.

RELEASE OF FUNDS

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands certifies to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD Honolulu Field Office that the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Governor Ralph DLG. Torres consent to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process, and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development HUD Honolulu Field Office acceptance of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and related laws and authorities, and allows the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands to use Program Funds.

OBJECTION TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development HUD Honolulu Field Office will accept objections to its release of funds and the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands certification for a period of **fifteen (15) days** following anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if it is on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands; (b) the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient has incurred cost not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of the release of funds by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures of 24 CFR Part 58 and shall be addressed to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Honolulu Field Office by email to CPD Honolulu Field Office: CPDHonolulu@hud.gov and CPD\_COVID-19OEE-HNL@hud.gov. Potential objectors should contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

/s/  
**Ralph DLG Torres**  
Governor, CNMI

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# Yeom: Bill to regulate casino gambling is unconstitutional

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Commonwealth Casino Commission executive director Andrew Yeom has informed the CCC board that a House local bill that proposes to authorize, establish, and regulate casino gambling within the Third Senatorial

District is unconstitutional according to the Office of the Attorney General's opinion.

The Third Senatorial District refers to Saipan and the Northern Islands.

During the CCC board meeting last week at the Springs Plaza Building in Gualo Rai, Yeom said the OAG's opinion on House Local Bill

22-26 is that the CNMI cannot have a local legislation trying to supersede Commonwealth Public Law 21-38.

Public Law 21-38 clarifies and enhances CCC's powers, including the authority to issue a casino license.

Moreover, Yeom said, HLB 22-26 would be unconstitutional because an exclusive casino licensee has al-

ready been established and it would violate Article 1 Section 1, the Contracts Clause of the CNMI Constitution.

House floor leader Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (R-Saipan) introduced HLB 22-26 last Oct. 29, proposing to increase the



Yeom

number of casino licenses on Saipan from one to five. He cited the need to secure a source of funding for the 25% portion of the retirees' pensions for introducing the measure, as well as in anticipation of the revocation of the exclusive Saipan casino license

of the struggling Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC.

The legislation has been referred to the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation.

Last month, Senate President U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) said SNILD has no authority to pass HLB 22-26 as the legislation is not legally sufficient.

Hofschneider said SNILD cannot enact a local bill that supersedes or contradicts the authority of the Commonwealth Casino Commission, as established by Public Law 18-56.

## MAN

From Page 1

Kong's girlfriend, Yi Lyuqin, is also facing separate charges as an alleged accessory to the crime after she hid the knife that was allegedly used to stab Li. A separate bail hearing was held at the Superior Court for her yesterday.

According to court documents, Kong allegedly stabbed Li multiple times following an altercation between the two that stemmed from an altercation between their girlfriends.

Due to the stabbing, Li suffered multiple injuries to his upper body with lacerations on his head, neck, and upper torso and puncture wounds to his chest and left rib cage.

At around 12am on Jan. 1, Li was rushed to the Commonwealth Healthcare Center where he was unresponsive for a brief moment, before being revived and admitted to the CHC Intensive Care Unit. Unfortunately, Li succumbed to his injuries and was pronounced dead at by Dr. Elizabeth Culp 6:35am that same day. He died due to multi-organ failures from a stab wound to the left of his chest.

Police stated that Li was found on the concrete floor curled up in a fetal position, gasping for air just by the Hanamitsu Massage Parlor at around 11:54pm on Dec. 31.

Officers observed a laceration on the back side of the victim, while bystanders attempted to apply pressure on the wound.

With the assistance of DPS Chinese interpreter Yu Xinjuan, officers managed to get a statement from Kong at the scene where he stated that he was drinking with Li, when Li's girlfriend started talking bad about Kong's girlfriend, which led to the physical altercation between the two men.

At around 12:47am on Jan. 1, police arrested Kong and brought him to Kanoa Resort for medical clearance, before he was transported to the Department of Corrections to be booked and detained.

Kong told police at the scene that, during the fight, Li's girlfriend got hit as she attempted to intervene, prompting Kong to pick up an object from the ground and begin stabbing Li. When asked about the type of object he used to do the stabbing, Kong said he could not recall.

However, in a follow up interview

with Kong at around 6:40pm on Jan. 1, he said he got angry when Li was assaulting him, causing him to reach for the pocket knife in his right back pocket. He claims he decided to stop after two stabs after seeing Li's shirt soaked in blood.

After the stabbing, Kong said Yi told him to run, but he said he wouldn't. As they were approached by police at Smile Massage, Kong said he realized that the knife was gone from his pocket and assumed that Yi took it and left.

Meanwhile, during the on-scene investigation, another police officer noticed a female Asian, later identified as Yi, return to the crime scene but in a different outfit. Officers noted that there were blood stains on the side of the woman's chin.

At this same time, a DPS detective located a small, black folding knife behind a typhoon shutter attached to the westernmost unit adjacent to the Paris Croissant establishment. The knife was observed to be folded out with the blade exposed and with blood stain.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

## HOUSE

From Page 1

Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan), who is also the vice speaker, announced that the ad-hoc committee will be dissolved and its report will be sent to House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan).

The eight members of the committee are Reps. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan), Joseph A. Flores (Ind-Saipan), Joseph Lee Pan T. Guerrero (R-Saipan), Corina L. Magofna (D-Saipan), Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota), Christina Marie E. Sablan (D-Saipan), Patrick H. San Nicolas (R-Tinian), and Leila C. Staffler (D-Saipan).

Attao also clarified that, as per the rules, he would only cast a vote when there's a tie and since all eight members voted in the affirmative to send House Resolution 22-14 to the full House for action, he therefore didn't have to vote. "But if I had to vote, my vote would have been yes," he said.

Before the voting took place, Sablan provided some context for the action that they would be taking that day.

Sablan said it is apparent that the members of the Committee on Impeachment—Democrats, Republicans, and independents alike—have reached a consensus and agreed to forego any further hearings or taking up evidence and to send H.R. 22-14 to the House floor for action by the full body.

She said this agreement represents

months of legislative investigation by the House Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee into Torres' public expenditures and allegations of waste, fraud, and abuse of office.

Sablan said that, from June through December 2021, the JGO committee conducted hours of hearings with witnesses subpoenaed to appear and testify under oath. She said the JGO committee obtained and scrutinized thousands of pages of records, documenting the governor's wide range of taxpayer-paid expenditures, including first class travel for himself and his wife, reimbursements, utilities at his private estate, protective service detail, and use of government vehicles, vehicles, assets, and personnel.

This agreement, Sablan said, also reflects the months of legislative investigation that took place even before the JGO proceedings, beginning of the 21st Legislature in December 2019 with an Open Government Act request by the then-House minority, followed by the appointment of a bipartisan special committee to review and investigate executive expenditures.

"Some of us here today directly participated in these earlier proceedings, or we have been closely tracking them, or both," she said.

Sablan said their agreement acknowledges that the record is already voluminous, extensive evidence has already been laid out and carefully reviewed, and witnesses have been questioned.

She said Torres has asked for fairness, and that he may disagree but, from their perspective, he has been afforded a great deal of fairness, especially from those who have been part of this investigative process from the beginning.

Sablan said Torres has had multiple opportunities to address the allegations against him, allegations of violations of law and the public trust. The lawmaker said the governor has refused to answer questions and testify under oath, resorting to attacks in the media and a lawsuit against the JGO committee.

"So here we are today with these articles of impeachment, charging Gov. Ralph Torres with commission of felony corruption and neglect of duty," she said.

Sablan said this impeachment resolution is the culmination of two years of "diligent and painstaking legislative investigation." She said the impeachment resolution didn't just arise out of nowhere—it is sponsored by five of the nine members of the Committee on Impeachment, and 13 of the 20 House members.

"Perhaps the writing is indeed already on the wall. No one among us takes this action lightly. No one can say this process was rushed," the lawmaker said, adding that they do have a duty and a public mandate to see it through to completion.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

## Palacios calls for private sector employees to be paid premium pay; including DFEMS-9

Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios issued a statement yesterday that calls for private sector employees and DFEMS-9 employees to also be paid premium pay, similar to what frontline workers in the Executive Branch will be getting.

He said it is only right that that frontline workers have received their premium pay for their work in mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic.

"With this public health emergency still upon us and with the effects it has had on our economy, this payment is a much welcome relief to our eligible government workers. More importantly though, it is a recognition and a token of our appreciation for their bravery, courage, and sacrifices, in keeping us safe during this pandemic. Make no mistake, this premium pay is rightfully theirs, as it is clearly provided for under the AR-RPA funding, and they have earned it," he said.

"Our fellow workers in the private sector are still waiting for their premium pay. That must change. Just like in the government, there are frontline and essential workers in the private sector too. They deserve to be recognized for their courage and sacrifices as well. These include the cashiers, the gas attendants, the restaurant and catering employees, the bank tellers, the non-profit organization and social services employees,

the private nurses, the cleaners and staff at the COVID testing, vaccination, and quarantine sites, the warehouse and supply chain workers, just to name a few. They all sacrificed too and did their part to keep our daily lives going during this pandemic. It is only right that they receive their premium pay as provided for in the AR-RPA funding. In the true spirit of a One Marianas, eligible private sector employees should all be paid their premium pay without any further delay.

"Let us not forget the courageous DFEMS-9 firefighters, as they too deserve to be paid their premium pay, if they haven't received theirs already. During the early months of the pandemic and at the

height of uncertainty surrounding this global public health emergency, these brave firefighters placed their lives on the line on a daily basis so you and I can be safe. There is no disputing that they worked during the course of this ongoing pandemic. We are indebted to them, and the very least we can do is recognize their sacrifices, including those of their families that they left behind at home each time they reported to work in order that we remain safe.

"We are all in this fight together against the COVID-19 pandemic—the government sector and the private sector! Pay our heroes their premium pay now!" (PR)



Palacios

## VAXXED

From Page 1

day night, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. said the CNMI's total death toll from COVID-19 now stands at 18 since March 2020, with the average age of those who died being 65 years old—the youngest was 43 years old and the oldest was 95.

In the case of the latest 15 deaths, CHCC said that almost all were "diagnosed too late to use monoclonal antibodies." As such, CHCC urges those experiencing COVID-19 symptoms to seek care or get tested for COVID-19 early, as you may be eligible for monoclonal antibody treatment or other treatments that are administered soon after infection.

CHCC also reported Monday that a total of 37 new cases of COVID-19 were confirmed between Dec. 31 to Jan. 2.

Of the 37, three were identified on Dec. 31, 20 on Jan. 1, and 14 on Jan. 2—18 were found through contact tracing, 12 through community testing, and seven through travel testing.

The cases have since been isolated and are being actively monitored, and the vaccination statuses of the 37 were pending verification, said CHCC.

CHCC also reported that, as of Jan. 2, there have been 2,426 recoveries and 602 active cases since Oct. 28. As of Jan. 3, 12 individuals are hospitalized as a result of COVID-19: six are unvaccinated, six vaccinated, and two are on a ventilator. Two were discharged.





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**2019 NISSAN SENTRA S**  
STOCK # KY206649, FWD, 4-Cyl, 1.8 Liter, Automatic,  
CVT w/Xtronic, Est. Mileage: 29,969, Color: GRAY



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**\$19,995**

**2019 HONDA CIVIC LX**  
STOCK # KE008511, FWD, 4-Cyl, Automatic  
Est. Mileage: 39,000, Color: BLUE

WAS \$23,995



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**2017 KIA SEDONA EX**  
STOCK # H6343505, FWD, V6, 3.3 Liter, Auto, 6-Spd  
OD Sportmatic, Est. Mileage: 32428, Color: GRAY



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**\$22,995**

**2019 HONDA CIVIC LX**  
STOCK # KE001432, FWD, 4-Cyl, Automatic  
Est. Mileage: 21,100, Color: GRAY



NOW

**\$23,995**

**2018 NISSAN ROGUE SV**  
STOCK # JW488216, FWD, 4-Cyl, 2.5 Liter, Auto  
CVT Xtronic, Est. Mileage: 15,510, Color: WHITE



NOW

**\$24,995**

**2018 NISSAN ROGUE SV**  
STOCK # JW488216, FWD, 4-Cyl, 2.5 Liter, Auto  
CVT Xtronic, Est. Mileage: 15,510, Color: WHITE



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STOCK # KL000552, FWD, 4-Cyl, Automatic  
Est. Mileage: 52,300, Color: MAROON



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STOCK # LY249008, FWD, 4CYL 2.0 L, AUTO  
Est. Mileage: 388, Color: MAROON



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**2018 HONDA ACCORD TOURING**  
STOCK # JA084004, FWD, i-VTEC Turbo 1.5 L,  
AT 10 SPEED, Est. Mileage: 29,268, Color: GRAY



NOW

**\$27,995**

**2018 FORD F-150 Regular Cab XL**  
STOCK # HFB15243, 2WD, V6, Flex Fuel, 3.3 Liter, Automatic,  
6-Spd w/SelectShift, Est. Mileage: 16,022, Color: SILVER

WAS \$28,995



NOW

**\$27,995**

**2019 HONDA CIVIC HB**  
STOCK # KU228086, FWD, 4CYL, AUTO,  
Est. Mileage: 16468, Color: RALLY RED



NOW

**\$28,995**

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STOCK # HB091042, AWD, 6CYL 3.5L, Auto  
Est. Mileage: 24,500, Color: WHITE



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**\$30,995**

**2016 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER LIMITED BLACK EDITION**  
STOCK # GS134358 FWD, 3.5 L 6CYL,  
Auto, Est. Mileage: 16488, Color: BLACK



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**\$32,600**

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STOCK # KN760329, 4WD, 6 CYL, Auto  
Est. Mileage: 7,508, Color: WHITE



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EXCHANGE



# NMHC to roll out supplemental rental assistance program

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. will soon be launching a supplemental Emergency Housing Voucher Program where it will be handing out 132 emergency housing vouchers to help people in need of housing assistance.

This comes soon after the NMHC board of directors approved the Temporary Policy Supplement under the EHV program at its board meeting on Dec. 28, 2021.

The EHV program is part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 that authorizes the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to allocate 70,000 EHV's to eligible Public Housing Authorities throughout the United States and its territories. As an eligi-

ble PHA, the NMHC was allocated a total 132 EHV's. The TPS will be used as a guide on how to administer the rental assistance program.

One of the program's requirements is that NMHC must partner with a Continuum of Care organization. This resulted in NMHC entering into a memorandum of understanding with the CNMI Homeless Prevention Coalition, which is comprised of the Division of Youth Affairs, Micronesian Legal Services Corp., Karidat Social Services, and the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence.

The primary responsibility of the CHPC is to make direct referrals of qualifying individuals and families to NMHC.

The CHPC will determine whether or not the individual or family qualifies under one of the four eligibility categories for EHV's.

In order to be eligible for an EHV, an individual or family must meet one of four eligibility criteria:

Homeless as defined in 24 CFR 578.3;

At risk of homelessness as defined in 24 CFR 578.3;

Fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking (as defined in Notice PIH 2021-15), or human trafficking (as defined in the 22 U.S.C. Section 7102); or

Recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family's

homelessness or having high risk of housing instability as determined by the CoC or its designee in accordance with the definition in Notice PIH 2021-15.

The EHV Program will be officially launched on Jan. 10,

2022. For more information, you may contact NMHC at:

■ Saipan: (670) 237-1017/1018 or (670) 664-2599 or (670) 285-1921

■ Tinian: (670) 433-9272

■ Rota: (670) 532-9393

Applications for appt. may be downloaded at [decca.gov.mp](http://decca.gov.mp) or [dys.gov.mp](http://dys.gov.mp) and dropped-off at Kagman Community Center, Tanapag Youth Center, Tinian DYS office, or Sinapalo Youth Center. **(PR)**

## Hawaii upholds order requiring Navy to drain fuel tanks

**HONOLULU** (AP)—Hawaii's Department of Health on Monday upheld the governor's order requiring the Navy to drain massive World War II-era fuel tanks after oil leaking from the aging facility contaminated Pearl Harbor's tap water.

Marian Tsuji, the department's deputy director, on Monday said she agreed with the conclusions of an official appointed by the department to review the facts of the case. She said she would adopt the official's proposed findings as final, though would fix a typographical error.

The Navy is reviewing the decision, said Cmdr. Reann Mommsen, a spokesperson for the Navy Office of Information in Washington.

Hawaii law allows parties to appeal such decisions in the court system.

David Henkin, an attorney for Earthjustice, which represented the Sierra Club of Hawaii in the case, urged the

Navy not to appeal.

"The threat to Oahu's irreplaceable drinking water supply is far too dire for lawyers' games. It is time for the Navy finally to do the right thing and promptly comply with the Department of Health's order to defuel the Red Hill tanks," he said in a statement.

The department's hearings officer for the case, Deputy Attorney General David Day, concluded the tanks were a "ticking time bomb" that threaten the water supply on the state's most populous island.

He said they posed "an imminent threat to human health and safety or the environment" and agreed with the governor's order to defuel the tanks.

The Navy objected to Day's findings last week, saying he used an "overbroad" interpretation of the Department of Health's emergency authority to regulate underground fuel storage tanks. The Navy argued the tanks didn't currently pose an "imminent" threat.

The Navy last month detected petroleum in a well that supplies water to Pearl Harbor area military housing, offices and elementary schools. Navy officials say they believe the well became contaminated by a series of pipeline leaks at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility nearby.

The Navy received about 1,000 complaints from people saying their water smelled like fuel or chemicals or that they suffered from nausea, vomiting and other physical ailments. More than 3,000 military families are living in hotels and other alternative housing while the Navy addresses the contamination.

Honolulu's water utility draws from the same aquifer as the Navy's well, prompting concerns that one of Oahu's most important water sources may have also become tainted by oil. The utility has shut off one its wells that draws on the aquifer so petroleum doesn't taint its own water.



FERDIE DE LA TORRE

### HOUSE SESSION

House of Representatives Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) presides over a recent session of the House of Representatives on Capital Hill.



## Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



### INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-22-001

#### KOBLERVILLE SEWERLINE EXTENSION PROJECT

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Koblerville Sewerline Extension Project in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists of the installation of gravity sewer main, new service laterals, connection to existing service laterals, and the installation of sewer manholes.

*The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and CUC. The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.*

CUC requires the project to be completed in **300 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 for one IFB package set.

**One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid MUST** be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "**CUC-IFB-22-001, Koblerville Sewer Line Extension Project**" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 11, 2022**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

A Bid Guarantee of **fifteen percent (15%)** of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Performance Bond of **one hundred percent (100%)** of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC. A Payment Bond of **one hundred percent (100%)** of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). **Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.**

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. The award of a contract may be contingent upon the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) approval. If CPUC approval is required, the contract will not be executed by CUC until such approval is provided. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 30, 2021** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC's Procurement & Supply, Purchasing Administrator, via email address [manny.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:manny.sablan@cucgov.org), with a copy to Larry Manacop, Acting Chief Engineer for Water/Wastewater via email at [larry.manacop@cucgov.org](mailto:larry.manacop@cucgov.org), Joel Puyat, Engineer via email at [joel.puyat@cucgov.org](mailto:joel.puyat@cucgov.org) and Ms. Christie L. Sablan, Procurement & Supply, Senior Administrative Technician via email address at [christie.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:christie.sablan@cucgov.org).

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO  
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN  
Purchasing Administrator



## Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



### INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-22-009

#### PAU PAU BEACH 2-INCH WATERLINE EXTENSION PROJECT

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Pau Pau Beach 2-Inch Waterline Extension, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists, in general installation of a new main waterline and lateral service line; connection to the existing waterline; installation of gate valve assembly, PRV and PSV, flush hydrants, air release valves, fire hydrant assembly; existing lateral service tap relocation; restoration of existing asphalt concrete road; and other related work. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system.

This project is funded by a grant from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **180 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **January 13, 2022 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

**One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies** must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "**CUC-IFB-22-009, Pau Pau Beach 2-Inch Waterline Extension Project**", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 2, 2022**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A Bid Guarantee of **fifteen (15%) percent** of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of **one hundred (100%) percent** and a Performance Bond of **one hundred (100%) percent** of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 17, 2022** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – [manny.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:manny.sablan@cucgov.org) with a copy to Mr. Joel H. Puyat, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email [joel.puyat@cucgov.org](mailto:joel.puyat@cucgov.org) and Mrs. Marcela Tenorio Procurement & Supply, Senior Administrative Assistant – via email [marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org](mailto:marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org).

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO  
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN  
Purchasing Administrator



## Municipal council confirms Mendiola, Cruz appointments

The 18<sup>th</sup> Tinian Municipal Council confirmed on Dec. 23, 2021, the appointment of Megan C. Mendiola and Melanie B. Cruz to the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board and Public Land Advisory Board, respectively.

The two were appointed to their new positions by Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan.

Mendiola graduated from Tinian High School as the valedictorian of her graduating Class of 2012 and obtained her bachelor's degree in Technology

Administration with a minor in Communication Studies from Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas in December 2018.

Cruz graduated from Tinian High School in 2009, attended Northern Marianas College and Southern New Hampshire University from 2018 to 2019, and is armed with a long list of experience in a wide range of fields, including being an administrative assistant at the Tinian Department of Public Lands Office.

According to a Tinian Mu-

nicipal Council news release yesterday, one testimony that stood out from the public was offered by Felipe Aquino, who stated that he was very proud to see the two return home and show a willingness to help the community. "I am so happy to see that this appointment took place, and I urge the council to confirm these two ladies so we can hold them as examples for our other kids, still abroad, to see that they have something to come back to and contribute to our community," he said.

Municipal council member Juanita M. Mendiola, who chairs the council's Executive Appointments and Govern-

ment Investigation Committee, said: "I am very proud of our kids coming back home and wanting to be a part of building our community, and I am especially proud that these two are young women."

Municipal council chair Joseph E. Santos thanked the two for volunteering their services to the community between being parents and full-time employees.

Council vice chair Thomasa Palacios-Mendiola is still under quarantine and wasn't able to attend the confirmation hearing, but expressed her support of confirming the two appointees. *(Saipan Tribune)*



Melanie B. Cruz, left, and Megan C. Mendiola. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## 18th Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 19-20

A full weekend of games and competitions are set for the 18th Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 19-20, 2022, in the Marianas.

The festival, affectionately known as "Pika Fest" among locals ("pika" means spicy), pays homage to Tinian's small but famous "donne sali" hot pepper. Activities will include food sales, live entertainment, competitions, arts and crafts sales, and more.

"Following close consultation with the CNMI COVID-19 Task Force and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., the Marianas Visitors Authority and the Tinian Mayor's Office are pleased to announce that this year's Tinian Hot Pepper Festival will again be held on Presidents Day weekend," said MVA managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo. "Following the success of last year's festival, COVID-19 prevention protocols—such as social distancing, wearing of masks, and hand washing—will be implemented, and we welcome all to Tinian for this

event in support of the Tinian community and economy."

The festival will be held from the afternoon into the evening on both days, with exact times to be announced. The Tinian Hot Pepper Festival will be held at the Fiesta Grounds in San Jose, Tinian, adjacent to Jones Beach.

Hotel accommodations are available at Tinian Ocean View, Lorilynn's Hotel, Tinian Street Motel, Fleming Hotel, Green Lion House Hotel, and the Marpo Valley Inn. Free camping is available at Kammer Beach, Taga Beach (toilets, barbecue pits, and outdoor showers available) and at the adjacent Tachogna Beach (barbecue pits, indoor showers, and toilets are available).

For more information, contact Tinian field operations supervisor Vida Borja at 1 (670) 433-9365 or e-mail at vborsa@mymarianas.com or MVA community projects specialist Jack Aranda at 1 (670) 664-3200 or email jaranda@mymarianas.com. *(MVA)*


**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
CNMI GOVERNMENT**


**INVITATION TO BID**  
**ITB NO.: DPW22-ITB No.: 42200028**

**SUBMISSION DATE: January 27, 2022 TIME: 10:00 A.M.**

### "Route 323, Industrial Road Improvements"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

**THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.**

The project package will be available on or after **December 29, 2021** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at DPW Technical Services Division required for each set.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **January 14, 2022**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the **Commonwealth Ports Authority Conference Room, Saipan**. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **January 20, 2022** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

**/S/ JAMES A. ADA**  
 SECRETARY, DPW

**/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON**  
 ACTING DIRECTOR,  
 DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for  
**Top Shelf, LLC**

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Top Shelf, LLC is proposing to stage and utilize three (3) 40' x 20' Cargo shipping containers for its indoor Cannabis Farm. The proposed cannabis farm measures at a total of 60' (L) x 25' (W) inclusive of two (2) vegetation mother & clone room, two (2) flowering room, one (1) storage & curing room, one (1) drying room, one (1) decontamination area and one (1) storage for its Cannabis Farm Use. This use is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. 053 E 11 in the village of As Teo. This area is zoned as Rural.

A public hearing will be held on:

**Date: January 19, 2022**  
**Time: 5:00 pm**  
**Place: Fiesta Hall, Grandvrio Resort**

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, January 18, 2022. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Perry Inos, Jr., Chairman

## NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for  
**AK Toyota Lexus Saipan**

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. AK Toyota Lexus Saipan is proposing to construct a new fully concrete structure for its Automobile Sales & Service and Vehicle Repair, General use. The proposed new dealership area shall include one (1) service shop with 14 service bays, and one (1) body shop with 7 bays for its Vehicle Repair, General use. This use is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. E.A. 896-R1 in the village of Puerto Rico. This area is zoned as Mixed Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

**Date: January 19, 2022**  
**Time: 5:00 pm**  
**Place: Fiesta Hall, Grandvrio Resort**

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, January 18, 2022. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Perry Inos, Jr., Chairman

## NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for  
**Elevated Minds**

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Elevated Minds is proposing to utilize an existing structure measuring 90' (L) x 20'.4" (W) for its Cannabis Farm. The proposed Cannabis Farm will be inclusive of two (2) flower rooms, one (1) vegetation room, one (1) dry room and one (1) propagation for its Cannabis Farm use. This use is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. 009 L 02 in the village of San Antonio. This area is zoned as Mixed Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

**Date: January 19, 2022**  
**Time: 5:00 pm**  
**Place: Fiesta Hall, Grandvrio Resort**

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, January 18, 2022. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Perry Inos, Jr., Chairman



# Opinion

Hafa Adair

## Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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### EDITORIAL

## Don't let the FAA ground 5G

**R**arely has an arcane interagency dispute proved so needlessly disruptive.

On Dec. 5, wireless carriers had expected to begin rolling out 5G, the next standard for cellular networks, on a critical new frequency known as the C-band. The deployment promised increased bandwidth, faster transmissions, wider range, and many new possibilities for wireless devices and apps, potentially turning a useful technology into a transformative one.

Enter the bureaucrats. In November—at the last minute, and after years of detailed planning—the Federal Aviation Administration objected to this process. It warned that emissions from the C-band could interfere with radio altimeters onboard aircraft. It suggested that 5G manufacturers and operators conduct added tests on their equipment and hinted that further “mitigation” measures could be on the way, including flight restrictions in dozens of locations.

On its face, the FAA's concern isn't unreasonable. Altimeters calculate an aircraft's altitude, help pilots land in limited visibility, assist in avoiding mid-air collisions, and inform numerous other safety systems. The FAA identified 17 on-board functions that could be at risk if an altimeter were subjected to harmful interference. If 5G actually threatened such equipment, the consequences could be dire.

Yet the Federal Communications Commission studied precisely this risk for years before approving the deployment. Some 40 other countries have authorized the use of 5G in the C-band, without a single report of harmful interference. Moreover, the U.S. deployment includes a “guard band”—or empty space between wireless and airplane frequencies—of 220 megahertz, which is up to twice as large as in comparable countries such as Japan. Six former heads of the FCC said in a recent letter that the FAA's position “threatens to derail the reasoned conclusions reached by the FCC after years of technical analysis and study.”

They're right. The FAA's position is based almost entirely on a single technical report that, as wireless groups have pointed out, relies on flawed methodology, implausible assumptions, and extreme testing standards to reach a conclusion that contradicts years of careful study by regulators and industry stakeholders. More to the point: Real-world data from across the globe yields no evidence of a significant threat.

In an effort to ease this impasse, trade groups from the telecoms and aviation industries have agreed to share data ahead of the next planned rollout date of Jan. 5. The FAA and FCC insist that they're working together as well. An agreement of some kind—such as imposing modest restrictions on 5G operations near airports, as some countries have done—should hopefully allow wireless carriers to deploy the technology without being accused of putting lives at risk.

By one estimate, 5G could add \$1.5 trillion to U.S. gross domestic product and create some 4.5 million jobs. Those gains, as well as future innovations, are being jeopardized by a regulatory turf war. The sooner it ends, the better.

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## Stemming the culture of violence begins with all of us. Our children are watching

By **JERALD MCNAIR**  
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

**I**recall the days when having a fistfight didn't mean your life had to end. In the neighborhood where I grew up, an occasional fight wasn't uncommon. Sometimes it started because of bantering while playing a sport. These skirmishes often taught us that we could disagree but still remain friends. It was, in some sense, progress. Those moments didn't result in anyone going to the hospital or becoming lifelong enemies.

The abolitionist Frederick Douglass once said, “If there is no struggle, there is no progress.” He was referring to the hard work, sacrifice and dedication it would take to ensure freedom for African Americans. He was declaring that the road to freedom would be hard but traveling it would be well worth it. Moving our nation from a place that embraced slavery to one that embodied the virtues of freedom, democracy and equality was progress that made us all better.

Unfortunately, the philosophy of struggle seems to have lost its luster. In our politics, we have become so polarized that we are unwilling to put in the necessary work to find common ground. It may be easier to hit the lottery than to get bipartisan legislation passed. Fortunately, the House and the Senate recognize, at least to some degree, the deleterious impact the gridlock is having on our democracy. They are both working on improving their legislative effectiveness. The House-based Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress has issued recommendations for better ways of operating while the Senate is seriously considering filibuster reform.

Just like Congress, it's time for us, the adults, to rethink how we are communicating and treating each other. When we disagree, it's not only understandable, but it also should be expected. After all, we have different points of view. Through constructive discourse, we can improve our understanding of each other. Having a disagreement should not make us enemies. How we act and behave during this process is what sets the stage for mutual respect and understanding.

Unfortunately, far too many of us have forgotten the Golden Rule. We see growing evidence of adults misbehaving in public. Such as on airplanes. It's to the point that flight attendants are now taking self-defense classes to protect themselves from poorly behaved passengers. This year, the Federal Aviation Ad-

ministration reports conducting more than 1,000 investigations into reports of unruly passengers.

We also see it on the roads: motorists cutting off others in traffic, driving closely to force others to go faster or using profane gestures. They are all demonstrations of adults setting the wrong example. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, a large number of collisions can be attributed to road rage and aggressive driving. Rage also drives homicides.

Is it any wonder that violence and maladaptive behavior have become normalized for our youths? They are watching what we say and do. Now, a fistfight between youths in the neighborhood can lead to bloodshed in the streets or worse.

We read about altercations in schools that lead to retaliatory actions in the streets. This overarching mindset and our culture of intolerance are affecting the hearts and minds of far too many of our youths. They may believe that any form of disagreement means that the other person is their combatant. Common ground isn't sought when each person is villainized. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly half of teens have experienced some kind of violence in their lives.

It's our responsibility as adults to change this perspective and provide a more civil environment. Attitude reflects leadership, as the saying goes. So are we providing the right leadership and examples? If we were to ask our children whether we are good role models, what would their responses be?

I have fond memories of the days when political leaders from both parties would sit across the table and debate the issues without resorting to name-calling. And following debate, they would shake hands and have thoughtful words to say about each other. I also relish the time when disagreements between youths did not lead to mob action and bloodshed.

Stemming the culture of violence starts with us. It's in how we treat our relatives, our neighbors, our cashiers at the local store, our delivery drivers and our restaurant workers. Our children are watching and taking their cues from us.

Let's start the new year being better examples for the future generation. Our youths want us to do better. We cannot continue to let them down and then ask that they do better.

*Jerald McNair is an administrator at School District 151 in South Holland, Illinois.*



**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

## Renewable energy from cow manure

At the virtual Leaders' Summit on Climate hosted by the United States in April, Japan declared its aim to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46% in fiscal year 2030 from its fiscal year 2013 levels—an ambitious goal to achieve carbon neutrality by year 2050.

Meanwhile there is a small town in Japan that uses a unique method to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. The town is called Okoppe Town. It is a small town with population of 3,700, located along the coastline of the Sea of Okhotsk in Hokkaido, where their primary industry comes from dairy farming, forestry and fishing. This small town has surprised the world by reportedly being the world's first to successfully produce methanol and formic acid from livestock manure biogas in February 2020.

As a matter of fact, Japan designated Okoppe Town as "City of Biomass Industry" in 2014. Afterwards, its municipality-managed Okoppe Hokkou Biogas Plant continued to research the most effective way to use biomass resources. The town also has two other privately-owned biogas plants in operation to process 20% of livestock manure to methane fermentation.

In Hokkaido there is a plan to establish a biogas plant. But as the operation policy uses Feed-in Tariff\* model to sell electricity, they are urgently trying to find a solution to reconsider the operation policy to continue to make profit even after the end of

the FIT period.

In order to convert the energy usage of biogas to other than electricity, the most efficient method is to convert methane gas to liquid to produce high density energy, making it possible to be stored or transported. But it has been regarded that the process to convert the principal component of biogas, methane gas, to liquid is a especially difficult task.

In 2018, an Osaka University research group discovered that illuminating ultraviolet rays onto a flask mixed with dissolved chlorine dioxide and biogas turns methane to methanol and formic acid under regular temperature and pressure conditions. In 2019, Osaka University and Okoppe Town signed a cooperative agreement to develop a method to formulate liquid fuel from biogas produced by livestock manure. And in a year of research and development, they were the world's first to produce bio-based methanol and formic acid.

As of 2020, two private companies have joined the cooperative agreement, allowing to implement the use of liquid fuel in fiscal year 2030 or later. If this effort becomes successful, it would provide a plant to be self-sufficient, running off on methanol fuel and allow the biogas plant to not rely on the FIT to operate. Also, it would be possible for excess methanol to be sold outside of their usage. With this in mind, Okoppe Town is planning to supply the excess methanol to the town electric vehicle charging

By **ONO KAZUHIKO**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

*Ono Kazuhiko is the Japanese consul and head of the Consular Office of Japan on Saipan.*



station and public fuel cell charging station, official vehicle, fuel delivery vehicle, fire extinguisher vehicle and dairy cow vehicle.

It is difficult to say that these technologies have been implemented or commercialized as it is still currently going through testing stage. But in the near future it is certain that these technologies will not only be implemented or commercialized in Hokkaido but throughout Japan. In the CNMI, specifically on Tinian, there are farms that produce cattle. I hope that one day, the CNMI would implement these technologies to minimize the emission of greenhouse gas to protect our nature.

*\*Feed-in Tariff, or FIT, is a policy where the government purchases solar, wind, hydro, geothermal and biomass energy at a fixed price for a given period.*

## Fewer kids read for fun anymore. They're losing out on more than great stories

It was Harry Potter—or, actually, his buddy Hermione Granger—who made my 6-year-old granddaughter enthusiastic about learning to read.

She was reasonably interested in reading before that, though remote learning during most of her kindergarten year means she and all the other first-graders at her small charter school along the central coast of California aren't at the pre-pandemic levels of literacy for their age. Then, as my daughter began reading the J.K. Rowling books to her, my granddaughter discovered the girl witch and now is obsessed with books.

Hermione frequents the Hogwarts library and, just for the pleasure of it, absorbs the information within its books. More often than not, that information saves the day for her and her friends. My granddaughter wants to be a heroic brainiac just like Hermione. She knows that means unlocking the codes of reading.

Of course, she was probably destined to become a lover of reading. Her parents both have doctorates in English literature. My daughter probably got much of her love of reading from me. I got it from my father, who dropped out of high school to support his parents and siblings during the Great Depression, but who nonetheless made weekly trips to the library throughout his life to borrow a stack of books that he would devour. Family background aside, almost any student can love reading and begin their own family tradition.

As a mother who had three kids in public schools, it always bugged me that the elementary school had a voluntary "reading club" in which students received prizes based on how much reading for pleasure they did each week. The message seems all wrong: We have to bribe you to read for fun.

All this comes to mind now that a survey by the National Assessment for Educational Progress—the organization that produces the periodic Nation's Report Card based on student testing—found that the numbers of 9- and 13-year-olds who regularly read for pleasure had plummeted.

Elementary school children are more likely to read than their older counterparts, according to the survey. But still, the number of 9-year-olds who say they read for enjoyment almost every day dropped from slightly more than half in 1984, to 42% during the 2019-20 school year. The trend among middle schoolers is worse. The proportion who frequently read for fun dropped by more than half, to 17%, while the percentage who seldom or never do more than tripled.

(High school students weren't surveyed because the pandemic arrived before NAEP got around to questioning them, but their reading habits were following the same pattern as middle school-

ers in earlier years.)

This is worrisome for many reasons. Kids who read for pleasure daily score the highest on reading assessments, according to the American Library Association; no surprise there. The link is especially strong when kids talk with others about the books they're reading.

A British study found that reading for pleasure had much wider benefits, resulting in better vocabulary, spelling and mathematical abilities. And reading for pleasure was more important to those successes than were students' socioeconomic backgrounds. According to the nonprofit reading-advocacy group Kids Read Now, readers also learn better empathy, decision-making and social skills.

One contributor to this dismaying trend seems obvious: Social media and other digital activities are heavy draws and can gobble up hours of time, according to the American Psychological Association.

But some librarians and students point to other reasons as well: As students advance in school, required reading of textbooks and classroom-assigned literature increases. They may be reading more, but often enjoying it less. Add to that the time demanded by an ever-busier menu of structured activities (at least before the pandemic) such as jobs, sports or other extracurriculars. The homework load also is heavier in high school than in lower grades, often exceeding the recommended maximum of two hours a day. It's easy to see why picking up a magazine or another book doesn't seem like a great way to decompress.

So if kids are reading social media posts, isn't that just a modern form of reading for pleasure? And if they're hitting the schoolbooks, isn't that giving them more than enough exposure to the written word?

Obviously, the research on the benefits of a reading hobby show otherwise. As a book lover and writer, my emotional response is that nonreaders are missing out on greater experiences than social media can give them. The world of the written word, whether it's found in a leather-bound novel or the digital version of a newspaper, is a rich and wondrous place that makes almost all things possible. We expand our horizons every time we enter deeply personal or imagined worlds that may change our outlook on life, teach us how to grow our own vegetables, or, like Hermione, offer the secrets to save the world. Learning how those mysterious black squiggles on the page translate to words and sentences is only the first part of reading. The second, more important part is learning to love what we find between the covers.

By **KARIN KLEIN**

Los Angeles Times

*Karin Klein is an opinion writer for the Los Angeles Times.*



The reliance on social media as a reading outlet instead of more authoritative resources is also helping to fuel beliefs among some people in anti-scientific shibboleths like vaccines causing autism or no evidence that masks help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Reading for pleasure isn't the same as assigned reading because kids need to be able to relax with the reading material of their choice, according to Kids Read Now. As a child, my son used to finish his reading for school and then sigh with pleasure, saying, "Now I can read."






Parents play a key role in this, but many may not realize how important it is to expose their kids to books, magazines and the like. Robust funding of libraries, dedicated specifically to public outreach, children's book sections and fun, free activities for families would help. Instead of telling parents all about the grading rubrics in use, back-to-school nights should make reading for pleasure one of the major themes pushed home to parents, at all grade levels.

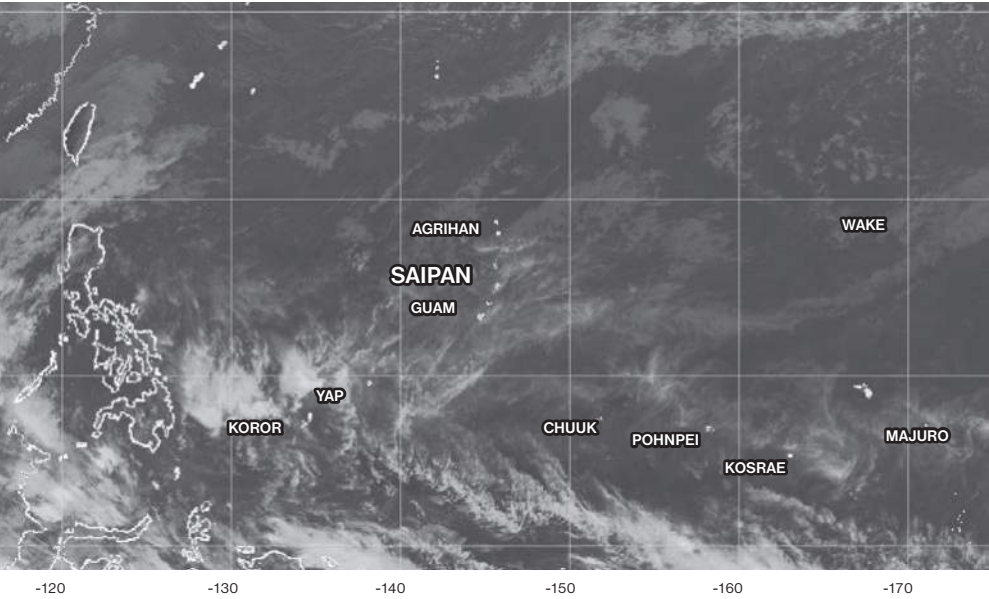
Giving older students more choices in what they read for class would help encourage pleasure reading too, while still requiring those books to have some rigor. The class could make group choices or students could pick from a menu of options instead of being assigned a single book. When we spoon-feed books to kids, we deprive them of the experience of realizing there's a bigger world of books out there for them to explore. Teachers should keep in mind that Black students are less likely to read for pleasure; it shouldn't be any surprise that many school-assigned books, emphasizing the roles of white people, aren't exactly a literary turn-on for them.

This isn't the dumbing down of school. It's a realization that lifelong love of reading brings both soul-satisfying pleasure and extrinsic benefit. One of the greatest forms of learning that parents and teachers can impart to kids is the joy of diving into reading material, whether it's a poem about nature, a murder mystery or an article about fast cars.



# The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
									
Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.		Partly cloudy with a 10 percent chance of showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Lows in the mid 70s.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Lows in the mid 70s.	
85°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



**PICTURE TIME: 7:59 AM, TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2022**

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line has stalled just south of Guam and will help keep fresh to strong northeast winds across the region. Satellite imagery shows mostly mid to upper-level clouds over the region. Ipan buoy is reporting seas around 7 to 8 feet and altimetry shows seas around 10 to 11 feet just west of the Marianas.

*Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)*

## STOP THE SPREAD

**T**he Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

**Continue good hand hygiene**

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

**Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic**

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
  - Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
  - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

onds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at [www.chcc.gov.mp](http://www.chcc.gov.mp) or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit [www.governor.gov.mp](http://www.governor.gov.mp) and, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at [www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19](http://www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19).

**Rumor control**

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

*Source: Office of the Governor*

**NEWS DESK** For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235.3740. E-mail: [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com). Website:[www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

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MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	84 / 76 °F	
Palau	Thunderstorms	82 / 76 °F	
Yap	Thunderstorms	83 / 77 °F	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	85/ 79 °F	
Pohnpei	Scattered Thunderstorms	85 / 78 °F	
Kosrae	Showers	85 / 79 °F	
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	84 / 80 °F	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:44 AM	6:00 PM
Thursday	6:44 AM	6:00 PM
Friday	6:44 AM	6:01 PM
Saturday	6:44 AM	6:01 PM
Sunday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	8:59 AM	8:38 PM	-
Thursday	9:48 AM	9:38 PM	-
Friday	10:32 AM	10:32 PM	-
Saturday	11:11 AM	11:24 PM	-
Sunday	11:48 AM	-	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly cloudy	78 / 65 °F	
Beijing	Sunny	40 / 18 °F	
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	71 / 64 °F	
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	79 / 69 °F	
London	Cloudy	75 / 64 °F	
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	80 / 64 °F	
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	86 / 74 °F	
Melbourne	Thunderstorms	76 / 65 °F	
Miami	Cloudy	8 / 19 °F	
New York	Mostly Sunny/Wind	11 / -1 °F	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	46 / 35 °F	
Paris	PM Showers	85 / 68 °F	
Busan	PM Showers	85 / 68 °F	
Rome	PM Light Rain	61 / 48 °F	
Salem	Partly Cloudy/Wind	83 / 76 °F	
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	79 / 62 °F	
Seoul	Cloudy	36 / 17 °F	
Tokyo	Sunny	47 / 31 °F	
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	42 / 33 °F	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
3:27 AM	Low Tide	-0.87	
10:41 AM	High Tide	1.82	
4:07 PM	Low Tide	1.07	
8:44 PM	High Tide	1.79	

## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 12, 2021

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	7:20am	8:05am	2, 4, 6	UA116	5:30am	6:16am	2, 4, 6
UA117	9:50am	10:35am	1, 3, 5, 7	UA174	8:00am	8:46am	1, 3, 5, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	Daily	UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	2, 5
				UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	7:20am	9:50pm	2, 4, 6 via Guam	UA184/174	10:40pm	6:16am+1	5 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam	UA184/174	10:40pm	8:46am+1	2 via Guam
				UA184/174	10:55pm	6:16am+1	1, 3 via Guam
				UA184/174	10:55pm	8:46am+1	4, 6, 7 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	6	7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	6
TW9308	3:20PM	8:00PM	4, 5	OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	6
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	6	TW9307	10:00AM	2:20PM	4, 5

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

## STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

### FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA				1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily	1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily	1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri Daily	1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily	1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily	1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily	TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri Daily	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily	2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
ROTA TO GUAM				2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable	2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable	2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily	2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily	2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable



# Business

## Thousands of flights canceled, delayed at start of workweek

By DAVID KOENIG & MATT O'BRIEN  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

A winter storm that hit the mid-Atlantic on Monday combined with pandemic-caused shortages of airline workers to push flight cancellations to a holiday-season high, creating more frustration for travelers just trying to get home.

More than 3,000 U.S. flights and about 4,800 worldwide were canceled by late afternoon Monday on the East Coast, according to tracking service FlightAware. Another 13,000 flights were delayed, including more than 6,000 in the U.S.

Travelers could take hope from an improving weather forecast: Airlines had canceled fewer than 400 U.S. flights scheduled for Tuesday.

First, however, they had to contend with a winter storm that dumped several inches of snow on the District of Columbia, northern Virginia and central Maryland before



AP  
Passengers queue up to check in at the counter for American Airlines Monday, Jan. 3, 2022, as the line snakes into the main terminal of Denver International Airport in Denver.

quitting Monday afternoon.

The cancellations and delays added to the despair felt over the weekend by holidays travelers trying to get home.

Jason Pevitt was stuck at the Atlanta airport for eight

hours—and counting—by Monday evening, trying to get home to Virginia after spending the holidays with his family in Tampa, Florida. He was growing increasingly anxious about the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the terminal.

American Airlines canceled Pevitt's original flight to Washington's Reagan National Airport long before a winter storm system hit the

Washington area Monday. He rebooked on Delta Air Lines but got hit with more cancellations after a stopover in Atlanta—this time clearly due to the storm.

"There is just never a reason given for anything. That's my biggest issue," said the 28-year-old, who works for an accounting company.

Many other travelers tweeted at the airlines to complain about last-minute cancellations and long delays, lost

bags and hourslong hold times to reach anybody in customer service. Some said they slept in airports.

The toll of grounded flights in the U.S. was in the few hundreds per day the week before Christmas, then soared past 1,000 a day. Airlines blamed crew shortages on the spreading virus, including the highly transmissible omicron variant—new cases tripled

over the past two weeks, according to figures from Johns Hopkins University.

Airlines and passengers lucked out for several days with mostly favorable weather, but that changed when a winter storm hit the Midwest on Saturday and caused cancellations to spike again to new holiday-season highs.

Over the weekend, about 5,400 U.S. flights were canceled—nearly 12% of all scheduled flights—and more than 9,000 worldwide, according to FlightAware. By Monday afternoon, about 18,000 U.S. flights had been canceled since Christmas Eve.

Many of the cancellations were made hours or even a day in advance. Airline believe they have a better chance to keep lighter schedules on track, and it saves passengers from making needless trips to the airport.

More than three-quarters of Monday's scheduled flights at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and nearly half of those at nearby Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport were scrubbed, according to FlightAware. Both airports received more than six inches of snow.

### Abbruzzese to join BOH executive team

**HONOLULU, Hawaii**—Marco A.

Abbruzzese will join Bank of Hawaii as vice chair and senior executive director of Wealth Management on Jan. 10, 2022. He will be



**Abbruzzese**

director overseeing its Washington, Oregon, and Alaska wealth management markets. Abbruzzese successfully led a team of more than 250 employees focused on developing new markets, enhancing client relations, and championing the use of new technologies.

Throughout his career, Abbruzzese has been a supporter of organizations that support environmental stewardship, housing affordability, international education, and the arts. Most recently, he served as trustee and vice chair of board affairs for The Trust for Public Land Northwest Advisory Board and trustee and chair of strategic planning for the World Affairs Council. He was also appointed to the Seattle Public Schools International Education Advisory Council and was a longtime trustee for the Seattle Symphony Orchestra.

A native of Oregon, Abbruzzese earned his bachelor's degree in international affairs from Lewis & Clark College in Portland, and a master's degree from Columbia University's School of International & Public Affairs, where he specialized in international banking, finance, and political economy in New York City. (PR)

responsible for overseeing the wealth management areas of Trust Services Group, Investment Services, and The Private Bank at Bank of Hawaii. Abbruzzese will serve on the bank's Executive Committee.

"I'm so pleased to be welcoming Marco to Bank of Hawaii in the new year. With over 30 years of experience in wealth management, he brings the type of knowledge and leadership that will be essential in helping us to continue to meet the rapidly evolving needs of our clients as well as our team members," said James C. Polk, Bank of Hawaii's chief banking officer.

Over the past 30 years, Abbruzzese has held several senior and executive leadership roles specializing in wealth management at Wells Fargo, Citigroup, and Chase Manhattan. His robust experience for the past 14 years at Wells Fargo included first serving as regional manager in its Wealth Management Group before being appointed regional managing

## Trump, Ivanka, Don Jr. subpoenaed in New York AG's probe

**NEW YORK** (AP)—The New York attorney general's office confirmed Monday that it has subpoenaed former President Donald Trump and his two eldest children, Ivanka and Donald Trump Jr., demanding their testimony in an investigation into the family's business practices.

Attorney General Letitia James' office said in a court filing that it recently issued subpoenas seeking testimony and documents from the Trumps as part of a yearslong civil probe involving matters including "the valuation of properties owned or controlled" by Trump and his company.

Monday's filing, made public as James went to court in a bid to enforce the subpoena, was the first time that investigators publicly disclosed that they are also seeking information from Ivanka and Donald Trump Jr., both trusted allies of their father who've been executives in his family's Trump Organization.

Last month, it was reported that James' office had requested Trump sit for a deposition.

Lawyers for the Trumps filed court papers Monday evening seeking to block the subpoenas, calling them "an



AP  
President Donald Trump speaks during an event about the Paycheck Protection Program used to support small businesses during the coronavirus outbreak, in the East Room of the White House, April 28, 2020, in Washington, as Ivanka Trump listens.

unprecedented and unconstitutional maneuver" and accusing James of attempting to obtain testimony that could then be used against the Trumps in a parallel criminal investigation being overseen by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg.

James "seeks to circumvent the entire grand jury process" and nullify the Trumps' rights by forcing them to testify

without the immunity that's guaranteed under state law if they were subpoenaed to testify in front of the grand jury in the criminal probe, the Trumps' lawyers wrote.

James, a Democrat, has spent more than two years looking at whether the Trump Organization misled banks or tax officials about the value of assets—inflating them to gain favorable loan terms or minimizing them

to reap tax savings.

"Despite their names, they must play by the same rules as everyone else. These delay tactics will not stop us from following the facts or the law, which is why we will be asking the court to compel Donald Trump, Donald Trump Jr., and Ivanka Trump to testify with our office under oath," James said in a statement after the Trumps' move to block the subpoenas.



# Nation

## Omicron upends return to US schools and workplaces

By JENNIFER PELTZ, GRETCH-  
EN EHLKE & TERRY TANG  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Some school systems around the U.S. extended their holiday break Monday or switched back to online instruction because of the explosion in COVID-19 cases, while others pressed ahead with in-person classes amid a seemingly growing sense that Americans will have to learn to co-exist with the virus.

Caught between pleas from teachers fearful of infection and parents who want their children in class, school districts in cities such as New York, Milwaukee, Chicago, Detroit and beyond found themselves in a difficult position midway through the academic year because of the super-contagious omicron variant.

New York City, home of the nation's largest school system, reopened classrooms to roughly 1 million students with a stockpile of take-home COVID-19 test kits and plans to double the number of random tests done in schools.

"We are going to be safe, and we will be open to educate our children," newly sworn-in May-

or Eric Adams said on MSNBC.

New Yorker Trisha White said that she feels the risk is the same for her 9-year-old son in or out of school and that being with classmates is far better for him than remote learning.

"He could get the virus outside of school," she said as she dropped the boy off. "So what can you do? You know, I wouldn't blame the school system. They're trying their best."

While the teachers union had asked the mayor to postpone in-person learning for a week, city officials have long said that mask requirements, testing and other safety measures mean that children are safe in school. The city also has a vaccination mandate for employees.

New cases of COVID-19 in the city shot up from a daily average of about 17,000 in the week before the holidays to nearly 37,000 last week.

Across the U.S., new COVID-19 cases have tripled in the past two weeks to over 400,000 a day, the highest level on record, amid a rush by many Americans to get tested.

The high infection rates and resulting worker shortages are

putting a heavy burden on employers large and small. Thousands of airline flights have been canceled in recent days, and many businesses have shelved return-to-work plans.

Weekend garbage collection

was delayed in New Orleans, and jury trials in several Colorado counties were suspended. Some libraries on New York's Long Island and a ski resort in New Hampshire had to close.

Dawn Crawley, CEO of

House Cleaning Heroes, a cleaning service based in Herndon, Virginia, said she had to cancel four of 20 cleaning jobs for Tuesday because four employees were sick—three with COVID-19.

"The fear is it will run through the team" as well as customers, she said.

Policymakers and health authorities have been mindful of the toll on the economy and the education system.

## FDA expands Pfizer boosters for more teens as omicron surges

By LAURAN NEERGAARD  
AP MEDICAL WRITER

The U.S. is expanding COVID-19 boosters as it confronts the omicron surge, with the Food and Drug Administration allowing extra Pfizer shots for children as young as 12.

Boosters already are recommended for everyone 16 and older, and federal regulators on Monday decided they're also warranted for 12- to 15-year-olds once enough time has passed since their last dose.

But the move, coming as classes restart after the holidays, isn't the final step. A panel to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is expected to decide later this week whether to recommend boosters for the younger



Lucas Kittikamron-Mora, 13, holds a sign in support of COVID-19 vaccinations as he receives his first Pfizer vaccination at the Cook County Public Health Department, May 13, 2021 in Des Plaines, Ill.

teens with a final decision by Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the CDC's director.

The FDA also said everyone 12 and older who's eligible for a Pfizer booster can get one as early as five months after their last dose rather than six months.

FDA vaccine chief Dr. Peter Marks said even though serious illness is uncommon in younger teens, a booster will help them avoid that risk—while also helping reduce the spread of omicron or any other coronavirus mutant.

"Hopefully this will be

not just a call for people to go get their booster shot," but for the tens of millions of unvaccinated Americans to rethink that choice, Marks said. "It's not too late to start to get vaccinated."

The FDA based its latest booster decision largely on real-world data from Israel that found no new safety concerns when 6,300 12- to 15-year-olds got a Pfizer booster five months after their second dose.

Likewise, the FDA said even more data from Israel showed no problems with

giving anyone eligible for a Pfizer booster that extra dose a month sooner than the six months that until now has been U.S. policy.

The chief safety question for younger teens is a rare side effect called myocarditis, a type of heart inflammation seen mostly in younger men and teen boys who get either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines. The vast majority of cases are mild—far milder than the heart inflammation caused by COVID-19—and they seem to peak in older teens, the 16- and 17-year-olds.

### ACROSS THE NATION

#### Former Theranos CEO Holmes guilty of fraud and conspiracy


**SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)**—A jury found fallen Silicon Valley star Elizabeth Holmes guilty of fraud for turning her blood-testing startup Theranos into a sophisticated sham—one that duped billionaires and other unwitting investors into backing a seemingly revolutionary company whose medical technology never worked as Holmes promised. The 37-year-old Holmes was found guilty on 2 counts of wire fraud and 2 counts of conspiracy to commit fraud on Monday after 7 days of deliberation. The jury decision followed a three-month trial featuring dozens of witnesses—including Holmes her-

self—and numerous exhibits. She now faces up to 20 years in prison for each guilty count, although legal experts say she is unlikely to receive anything close to the maximum sentence. The jury deadlocked on the three remaining charges.

#### Investigators narrow search for origin of Colorado wildfire


**BOULDER, Colo. (AP)**—Federal and state investigators have interviewed dozens of people in their search for the cause of a destructive Colorado wildfire, but the results of that investigation—and even a progress report—could take days, if not weeks, the Boulder County sheriff warned. Declaring that "the stakes are huge," Sheriff Joe Pelle said

he would not release details on the probe until he was ready "to announce some progress—perhaps that may be a week, perhaps that may be a month." Getting it right, he told reporters Monday, was "more important than the urge for speed that a lot of folks are feeling right now." The wind-whipped inferno erupted Thursday, destroying nearly 1,000 homes and other structures and forcing tens of thousands of residents to evacuate in a rapidly-growing suburban area pockmarked by grasslands between the cities of Boulder and Denver. Two people were missing, and crews sifted two locations by hand and used small tools in their search for any remains.



### Commonwealth Zoning Board Meeting

January 19, 2022 | 5:00 PM  
Fiesta Hall, Grandvrio Resort  
Tel: 234-9661/2 • Fax: 234-9666  
www.cnmzoning.com



## AGENDA

**A. Preliminary Matters**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of 12/28/21 and 12/29/21 Zoning Board Meeting minutes.
5. Public Comments (not for items to be discussed in item B. Public Hearings)

**B. Public Hearings:**

1. **Conditional Use Application #2020-10297** – Top Shelf, LLC is proposing to stage and utilize three (3) 40' & two (2) 20' Cargo shipping containers for its indoor Cannabis Farm. The proposed cannabis farm measures at a total of 60' (L) x 25' (W) inclusive of two (2) vegetation mother & clone room, two (2) flowering room, one (1) storage & curing room, one (1) drying room, one (1) decontamination area and one (1) storage for its Cannabis Farm Use. This use is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. 053 E 11 in the village of As Teo. This area is zoned as Rural.
2. **Conditional Use Application #2020-10006** – Elevated Minds is proposing to utilize an existing structure measuring 90' (L) x 20' 4" (W) for its Cannabis Farm. The proposed Cannabis Farm will be inclusive of two (2) flower rooms, one (1) vegetation room, one (1) dry room and one (1) propagation for its Cannabis Farm use. This use is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. 009 L 02 in the village of San Antonio. This area is zoned as Mixed Commercial.
3. **Conditional Use Application #2020-10382** – AK Toyota Lexus Saipan is proposing to construct a new fully concrete structure for its Automobile Sales & Service and Vehicle Repair, General use. The proposed new dealership area shall include one (1) service shop with 14 service bays, and one (1) body shop with 7 bays for its Vehicle Repair, General use. This use is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. E.A. 896-R1 in the village of Puerto Rico. This area is zoned as Mixed Commercial. 549-2-R2 in the village of San Antonio. This area is zoned as Mixed Commercial.

**C. Old Business**

1. Saipan Zoning Law of 2013 - Amendments

**D. Executive Session**

**E. Miscellaneous**

1. Administrator's Updates
2. Permit & Enforcement Report

**F. Adjournment**

In an effort to provide public access to this meeting during this pandemic, the Commonwealth Zoning Board will host this meeting via:

**Zoom Video Communications**  
Meeting Link: <https://zoom.us/j/6853007492>  
Meeting Code: 685 300 7492



# Asia

## Australia COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations hit new record

**SYDNEY (AP)**—New virus cases in Australia surged to record levels on Tuesday, increasing the strain on hospitals and testing centers across the country.

In New South Wales, Australia's most-populous state, 23,131 new cases were reported, an increase on the record of 22,577 cases on New Year's Day. There were 1,344 people in hospitals, up 140 on the previous day and 78 more than the record previously set in late September. The new cases were detected from 83,376 tests, a positivity rate of 28%.

Victoria state reported 14,020 cases on Tuesday, eclipsing the record of 8,577 set on Monday. There were 516 people in hospitals, including 108 in intensive care.

The numbers do not necessarily reflect the true spread of the virus as they only include

the number of recorded cases.

The new numbers, however, confirm that Australia has passed the milestone of 500,000 COVID-19 cases.

New South Wales Chief Medical Officer Kerry Chant on Monday urged people not to seek hospital treatment unless absolutely necessary.

"It is important that we all play our part in not placing unnecessary burden on the health system," she said.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Monday rejected calls for the federal government to make rapid antigen tests free.

"We're now in a stage of the pandemic where you can't just make everything free," Morrison said on Monday. "When someone tells you they want to make something free, someone's always going to pay for it, and it's going to be you."

Testing centers were forced

to close in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland again on Tuesday either because of staff shortages or because laboratories which process the results are at capacity despite working 24/7.

In Victoria, where one in four tests was positive, 54 testing sites run by private companies closed on Monday.

"They're disappointed to have to do this but they're doing a pragmatic thing to safeguard their own systems and to make sure the labs can get back on top of their workload," Victoria COVID-19 Response Commander Jeroen Weimar said.

Australian Medical Association Vice President Chris Moy said in hospitals large numbers of healthcare workers have been furloughed after contracting the virus, making it difficult for remaining workers to provide adequate patient care.

## 'Media closures unrelated to press freedom'

**HONG KONG (AP)**—Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam on Tuesday said that the recent closure of two media outlets in the city does not reflect the state of press freedom in Hong Kong as the decisions were made by the outlets themselves.

Her comments came almost a week after authorities arrested seven people associated with pro-democracy online news outlet Stand News over sedition, with the outlet announcing that it would cease operations. Days later, another online site Citizen News also said it would stop operating.

"For none of the media outlets, we did not do anything. They were never approached by law enforcement agencies," Lam said during a news

conference Tuesday.

"But if they decided to cease operation out of their own concerns, I think this is nothing out of the ordinary." She added that Hong Kong authorities do "not seek to crack down on press freedom."

Lam said that the government follows the rule of law in Hong Kong, and that when she first assumed office, she had opened up government news conferences to online outlets and met with the Hong Kong Journalists Association.

"As long as news outlets do not engage in illegal acts, they can continue to report news in Hong Kong," Lam added.



Lam

She said that there was an increase of 5.4% for local news outlets registered in the city, and a jump of 9.4% for overseas outlets since the National Security Law was enacted in the city in June 2020.

"So you cannot say that the freedom of press is eroded due to the closing of the two media outlets," Lam said.

Since the security law came into effect, over a hundred people have been arrested, including many pro-democracy activists as well as some journalists who previously worked for the now-defunct Apple Daily and Stand News.



### CAMBODIA PROTEST

Theary Seng, center, a Cambodian-American lawyer, dressed in a prison-style orange outfit, raises hands with her supporter as she walks in front of Phnom Penh Municipal Court in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2022. Cambodian security forces on Tuesday briefly detained Seng as she walked barefoot near the prime minister's residence in Phnom Penh, wearing a prison-style orange outfit and Khmer Rouge-era ankle shackles.

AP

# World

## Fighting worsens in eastern Colombia; at least 23 killed

**BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)**—At least 23 people were killed in Colombia this weekend and 20 had to flee their homes as fighting between rebel groups intensified in the eastern state of Arauca, Colombia's Defense Minister said Monday.

The killings mark a setback for Colombia's government, which was able to bring down homicide rates in much of the country following a 2016 peace deal with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. But it is now struggling to control violence in rural pockets of the country where smaller rebel groups and drug trafficking organizations are fighting over smuggling routes, coca fields, illegal mines and other assets.

Arauca is home to some of Colombia's largest oil wells and is also crossed by a pipeline that is regularly attacked by rebel groups that steal its oil. The state

borders Venezuela and drug trafficking groups have been fighting over its smuggling routes for decades.

In a statement Monday, Colombia's army said the latest outbreak of violence was caused by fighting between the National Liberation Army, or ELN, guerrilla group and former members of the FARC who refused to join the peace deal. The army said that both groups are currently fighting for dominance over the area's drug trade.

Juan Carlos Villate, a human rights officer in the town of Tame, told Colombia's Blu Radio that he received reports of civilians who were dragged out of their homes and executed on Sunday by members of armed groups. Villate said that he had reports of 50 people who went missing and 27 who were killed over the weekend.

Human Rights Watch said it has received reports of 24

deaths, as well as forced displacements and abductions.

"It appears that the alliance between the ELN and dissidents with the 10th Front of the FARC in the zone has broken," said the group's Colombia expert, Juan Pappier.

Arauca last year received hundreds of refugees who fled from neighboring Venezuela following fighting between the Venezuelan army and FARC splinter groups that also operate on the Venezuelan side of the border.

President Ivan Duque said on Monday that he would send more troops to the area and increase surveillance flights to intercept armed groups and monitor their activity along the border with Venezuela. Duque accused Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro of providing shelter to some of these rebel groups and said Colombia would fight them "with all its might."

### WORLD BRIEFS

#### Haiti PM flees under gunfire as Haiti rings in new year

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)**—Haiti welcomed the new year with violence as Prime Minister Ariel Henry fled the northern city of Gonaïves following a shootout between his security forces and an armed group that had warned the leader not to set foot in the city. Local media reported that one person died and two were injured in the gunfire that forced Henry and others to duck and seek shelter as they walked out of a cathedral Saturday after attending a mass to celebrate Haiti's independence from France. The prime minister's office, when reached by The Associated Press, said Monday that "bandits and terrorists" made an attempt on Henry's life and accused the group of hiding behind walls to attack the convoy and of threatening the bishop by surrounding the church.

#### Ontario shuts schools, indoor dining, gyms amid infections

**TORONTO (AP)**—All schools in Canada's most populous province will be shut down and move to online learning because of a record number of coronavirus infections fueled by the ultra-contagious omicron variant, Ontario's premier announced Monday. Premier Doug Ford also announced the closure of indoor dining. Gyms and cinemas will also close and hospitals have also been told to pause all non-urgent surgeries. Ontario is locking down again, unlike the U.S. cities and states. Like the U.S., Ontario is seeing record new infections. Ford pointed to projections showing the total number of patients in hospitals would exceed capacity within a few weeks as Omicron is expected to tear through the population.

#### Navy helicopter crashes off Israeli coast; 2 pilots killed

**JERUSALEM (AP)**—Two Israeli pilots were killed when a navy helicopter crashed off Israel's Mediterranean coast late Monday near the northern city of Haifa, the Israeli military announced. The helicopter was conducting a training flight when it crashed. A third crew member, an aerial observer, was moderately injured and evacuated to a hospital, the military said early Tuesday. "After extensive resuscitation efforts, the two pilots were declared dead." The cause of the crash was under investigation. The chief of the Israeli Air Force has ordered immediate suspension of all training flights and the use of helicopters from the same array of the doomed aircraft. The families of the pilots have been notified. "The IDF expresses its heartfelt condolences to the families and will continue to support them," the statement said.

#### Cop couple overpower rowdy passenger on flight to Canada

**BERLIN (AP)**—Two off-duty officers heading for a holiday in Canada together as a couple stepped up and helped restrain a fellow passenger who became rowdy on their flight last week, Austria's Interior Ministry said on Monday. The ministry said the passenger started issuing threats about two hours into the flight "and thereby endangered the safety of the plane." After quietly reaching out to the plane's crew, the officers overpowered the disruptive passenger and kept him under observation until the plane landed and they were able to hand him over to Canadian authorities. In a statement, Lufthansa confirmed that the incident occurred on its Dec. 29 flight from Frankfurt to Toronto, and thanked the pair for their help. The German carrier declined to provide further details citing data protection.



# Good Housekeeping

## Making the most of headboards

By CATHY HOBBS  
Tribune News Service

A custom-made wood panel is used as modern headboard in this master bedroom.  
SCOTT GABRIEL  
MORRIS/PROVIDED  
PHOTO/TNS

**H**eadboards are sometimes viewed as inexpensive alternatives to a bed ensemble that includes side rails and

footboards, but these days they can also provide an opportunity for creativity and even saving space. Why not consider a headboard to grace the head of your bed? Here are some top tips to keep in mind.

**1** Add a bed skirt. Typically a headboard is placed against a metal or wood frame in which seeing the frame may be undesirable. A bed skirt will allow you to conceal the bed frame. A bed skirt with a

16- to 18-inch drop typically works best.

**2** Consider a headboard that involves stain-resistant fabrics. To help preserve an upholstered headboard, consider having it covered in a

stain-resistant or treated fabric. This will help considerably preserve the appearance of your headboard.

**3** Opt for batting. A plump and well-wrapped headboard will last longer than one in which the foundation is more thinly wrapped.

**4** Consider an alternative to a traditional headboard such as iron. Once considered

old fashioned, they are now used in interior settings in which people are looking for a midcentury modern or art deco feel.

**5** Consider an architectural feature or design element to act as a headboard such as a long wood panel, wall of mirror or upholstered panels that can even be affixed to the wall.

## How to clean a gas grill

By TOM LANGE  
ANGIE'S LIST

Nothing sounds worse at the end of an all-day barbecue than cleaning the grill.

After hours spent perfecting steaks, burgers and bratwursts for friends and family, it's tempting to let the grill cool and return to clean it tomorrow—maybe.

But falling behind on cleaning and maintaining a gas grill can take years off the grill's lifespan, and it will cost you in the long run.

"It's always the worst when you buy a \$1,000 grill, and three years down the road you're spending \$1,000 on parts," says Christopher Sanchez, retail general manager of Tru-Lite Gas Products in Houston.

### Clean the grill after every use

The best way to maintain a grill is to clean it after every cookout.

Start by turning the heat

up to medium or high to burn excess grease off of the grill grate.

"Let that baby run for about seven minutes, and burn off that excess grease and fat," Sanchez says.

### Find the right grill brush

Once the excess grease has burned off, brush the grates, panels and flavor bars—but don't use just any brush.

A brush's bristles shouldn't bend too easily, otherwise they could snap off. That's especially dangerous if you use a wire brush and accidentally ingest one of the bristles. A nylon brush, a wood scraper or grill-cleaning cloths are all safe alternatives.

A \$5 brush is too cheap to last beyond two or three cleanings, but you don't need to pay \$50 either. A \$30 brush should hold up for a long time before it needs to be replaced, Sanchez says.

Brush the grill as you would brush your teeth—the goal is to remove any remnants of

food that shouldn't be there.

Also, don't forget to empty the grill's grease trap, which collects fatty deposits while you're cooking. If it's not cleared regularly, it can start a fire in the grill that could spread to your home.

But don't ever use soap and water to clean the inside of a grill. Think of the grill as an oven; if you wouldn't use something to clean an oven, it doesn't belong near the grill, says Steve Pulone, vice president of operations for O'Malia's Living in Carmel, Indiana.

"You might as well be putting nails in the coffin," Pulone says.

### Keep the grill dry

A little advanced planning can also keep a gas grill's exterior looking nicer longer.

Rustproof metal paint can protect your grill during spring showers. If rust does appear, try using steel wool to remove it. A grill cover offers even more protection.

"Water is a pretty big enemy of a gas grill," Pulone says.

### Professional grill cleaning

Also consider having your grill professionally serviced and calibrated once each year by a qualified outdoor kitchen or gas grill specialist.

A professional can disassemble the grill, cleaning areas that otherwise would be difficult or impossible to reach. That's especially important for gas grills that use propane, as propane causes a buildup of soot (carbon), Sanchez says.

Once the grill is reassembled, a professional can check the gas grill's pressure to ensure the burners are heating evenly.

A professional cleaning takes about two hours from start to finish, and can cost \$130 to \$325, depending on the grill's size, Pulone and Sanchez say.

Proper grill cleaning and maintenance can keep a grill cooking past its typical lifespan, Sanchez says. So take 20 minutes, and clean the grill tonight.

The dishes can wait until morning.

## NOW HERE'S A TIP

By JOANN DERSON  
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■ Generally, for every degree you lower your thermostat during heating season, you reduce your energy costs by 3%.

■ Just in time for soup season (and my new year's resolutions), here's a great fat swap: Drain and rinse 2 cups of white beans and puree with a cup of no-sodium vegetable broth. You can use this as a thickener in place of heavy cream for soups and stews.—JoAnn

■ To keep snow off your windshield, use a flannel-backed tablecloth stretched to cover both windshield and wipers. Put it flannel-side to the glass. Then you'll be able to lift it (and the snow) off your windshield to drive.

■ Wondering what winter fruits and vegetables are in

season? Here's a sampling: apples, dates and pears, as well as citrus, like grapefruit, oranges and tangerines. For vegetables, consider endive, bok choy, Brussels sprouts, kale, leeks, mushrooms, parsnips, radicchio, rutabagas, sweet potatoes, turnips, yams and winter squash.

■ "Want to keep your pants from creasing on the hanger? Grab an empty paper-towel tube and slit it down the side. When you slip it over the bottom of the hanger, it creates a wide curve for the pants to lie across, and no more crease!"—M.U. in Colorado

■ Remember that as temperatures drop and layers of clothing increase, children in a car seat need special consideration. Remove heavy coats before strapping in a small child or baby. Winter wear can compress during an accident, and it interferes with the straps.



# Life & Style

## Document Prince Andrew claims prevents lawsuit is released

**NEW YORK (AP)**—A woman who says she was sexually trafficked to Britain's Prince Andrew by Jeffrey Epstein accepted \$500,000 in 2009 to settle her lawsuit against the American millionaire and anyone else "who could have been included as a potential defendant," according to a court record unsealed Monday.

The prince's lawyers say that language should bar Virginia Giuffre from suing Andrew now, even though he wasn't a party to the original settlement.

The private 2009 legal deal resolved Giuffre's allegations that Epstein had hired her as a teenager to be a sexual servant at his estate in Palm Beach, Florida.

Andrew was not named in

that lawsuit, but Giuffre had alleged in it that Epstein had flown her around the world for sexual encounters with numerous men "including royalty, politicians, academicians, businessmen and/or professional and personal acquaintances."

The settlement unsealed Monday also doesn't mention Andrew, but contains a single paragraph saying it protects anyone "who could have been included as a potential defendant" from being sued by Giuffre.

Attorney Andrew Bretler, representing the prince, has told a Manhattan federal court judge that the agreement



**Prince Andrew**

should release Andrew "from any purported liability."

Attorney David Boies, who represents Giuffre, said in a statement Monday that the language about protecting potential

defendants in the settlement between his client and Epstein was "irrelevant" to the prince's lawsuit in part because the paragraph did not mention the prince and he didn't know about it.

"He could not have been a 'potential defendant' in the settled case against Jeffrey Epstein both because he was not subject to jurisdiction in Florida and because the Florida case involved federal claims

to which he was not a part," Boies said.

Boies said he wanted the Epstein-Giuffre agreement publicly released "to refute the claims being made about it by Prince Andrew's" public relations campaign.

Giuffre sued the prince in August, saying he had sexually assaulted her multiple times in 2001 when she was 17.

The prince's lawyers say Andrew never sexually abused or assaulted Giuffre and that he "unequivocally denies Giuffre's false allegations against him."

They also wrote that Giuffre sued Andrew "to achieve another payday at his expense and at the expense of those closest to him. Epstein's abuse of Giuffre does not justify

her public campaign against Prince Andrew."

Arguments over the request to dismiss the lawsuit are scheduled for Tuesday.

Recently, the prince's lawyers have said Giuffre should be disallowed from suing in the U.S. because she has lived most of the past two decades in Australia and can't accurately claim to be a resident of Colorado, where her mother lives.

Judge Lewis A. Kaplan has rejected an attempt by the law-

yers to halt progression of the lawsuit and to subject Giuffre to a deposition over the issue of where she is a resident.

In late 2019, Prince Andrew told BBC Newsnight that he never had sex with Giuffre, saying, "It didn't happen."

He said he has "no recollection" of ever meeting her.

The interview was widely panned by critics who said Andrew seemed insensitive to Epstein's victims. Afterward, the prince stepped back from royal duties.

## Judge sets Jan. 28 for 'Tiger King' Joe Exotic resentencing

**OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)**—A federal judge in Oklahoma on Monday set a Jan. 28 date for the resentencing of "Tiger King" Joe Exotic.

U.S. District Judge Scott Palk set the resentencing for 10 a.m. and granted the defendant's request to be transported to Oklahoma City for the hearing.

A federal appeals court in July ruled that Joe Exotic, whose real name is Joseph Maldonado-Passage, should get a shorter sentence. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit in Denver determined the trial court wrongly treated two murder-for-hire convictions separately in calculating his prison term.

Maldonado-Passage was sentenced in January 2020 to 22 years in prison. But the appeals court said the court should have calculated his advisory sentencing range between 17 1/2 years and just under 22 years in prison, rather

than between just under 22 years and 27 years in prison.

Maldonado-Passage, who maintains his innocence, also was sentenced for killing five tigers, selling tiger cubs and falsifying wildlife records.

Last month, attorneys for the former Oklahoma zookeeper said he was delaying cancer treatment until after his resentencing. Maldonado-Passage announced in November that he has prostate cancer, and he was transferred from a federal medical center in Fort Worth, Texas, to a federal medical center in Butner, North Carolina.

In a separate action, a couple who succeeded Maldonado-Passage in operating the Greater Wynnewood Exotic Animal Park and Tiger King Park agreed to surrender their rights to 97 animals of endangered or threatened species and 47 other animals covered by the Animal Welfare Act.

## New hi-tech photo brings Rembrandt's 'Night Watch' up close

**AMSTERDAM (AP)**—Rembrandt van Rijn's iconic and huge painting "The Night Watch" is now also a super-sized museum photo delivered right to your laptop in unsurpassed detail.

The Amsterdam Rijksmuseum on Monday put on its digital portal what it called "the most detailed photograph of any artwork" ready for assessment by scientists and art lovers alike. It is expected to draw widespread interest especially since the museum is closed because of coronavirus measures.

The 717-gigapixel photo allows viewers to zoom in on Captain Frans Banninck Cocq and see how the 17th-century master put the tiniest of white dots in his eyes to give life to the painting's main character. It also shows the minute



(AP PHOTO/PETER DEJONG, FILE)

A microscopic image enlarging a 4x6 millimeter part of the painting on Rembrandt's Night Watch, which will be restored next year in the public eye, is seen on a screen next to the painting at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, Netherlands, Tuesday, Oct. 16, 2018

cracks in his pupils, brought on by the passage of time.

The real canvas measures 379.5 x 453.5 centimeters (149.4 x 178.5 inches) canvas and each pixel represents 5

micrometers or 0.005 square millimeters.

Apart from simply showing the dazzling detail, it will also help researchers restore the work and assess its aging

process over time.

The Night Watch will be removed from its wooden stretcher in two weeks and placed on a new one to remove rippling that was caused when the world famous painting was housed in a temporary gallery while the Rijksmuseum underwent major renovations from 2003-2013.

The oil-on-canvas painting depicts a group of Amsterdam civil militia and shows off Rembrandt's renowned use of light and composition to create a dynamic scene filled with characters.

The painting has undergone many restorations over its existence. It was placed on its present wooden stretcher in 1975. Once the painting has been re-stretched, the museum will decide whether further restoration work is needed.

## Parents wonder if son's friendship may be more

**DEAR ABBY:** My preteen son is friends with a boy I don't quite approve of, but I understand that sometimes bad decisions lead to future wisdom. When I can, I allow the friend to come to our house to hang out with my son because this friend allegedly has a difficult home life.

During this last visit, I noticed them hanging out a little physically closer than usual. They shared the same recliner to play video games, talked to each other using gamer tags and the like, and had what I assume were numerous inside jokes.

My husband and I would never belittle, degrade or denounce our children for being gay. We know we're from a bygone era, and we do not assume our particular values are held by our children. We have discussed it and know how to approach it from our perspective if our son announces his orientation. I'm not even certain my perception of his closeness with his friend is accurate.

My husband is more worldly than I am, and he says this kind of behavior is not unusual in the EU. Neither of us wants to address this ahead of anything occurring. We will love our son regardless and support him throughout our lives. I don't want to make him feel singled out by what may be usual pubescent behavior. My husband and I are in our 30s/40s. We live in an

extremely rural area, and this is my son's only real friend. Any insight would be appreciated.

WONDERING ON THE FARM

**DEAR WONDERING:** You may be jumping to conclusions unnecessarily. Sitting close to play video games and sharing inside jokes with a best friend are not necessarily signs of being gay. It is what best friends that age do. Whatever your boy's sexual orientation may be, you say you will love and support him regardless, so this shouldn't be a problem. His sexual orientation will reveal itself in its own time.

**DEAR ABBY:** Please help me figure out whether I've made a major mistake. I've been dating this man, "Frank," for six months. He has another woman in his life that he told me he's only a caregiver for, but then I learned he has been taking her to the lake and out to dinner.

After that, I found out she used to be a prostitute and lived with him for a few weeks and that he has been offered sex by her. He went into a panic when she was in the hospital and he didn't know where she was. He swears up and down that it's me he loves, not her. Help, please.

COMPETING IN GEORGIA

**DEAR COMPETING:** Do some digging. Who is the

## DEAR ABBY

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

source of the information you are being given? Is that person a reliable source, or could there be an ulterior motive? For a caregiver to "go into a panic" if his patient disappears would not be unusual.

And, while it's possible that he is driving to the lake and going out to dinner in his role as a caregiver, if the person paying the tab is him, then it's a date, and he hasn't been truthful with you. I would be interested in what you find out. Please write back and let me know.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)



Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

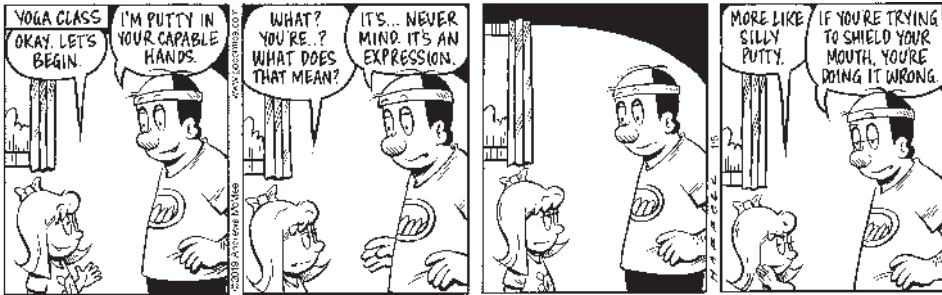


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Hot tub

4 Pack (down)

8 Honey-comb division

12 Joke

13 Teen fave

14 Celestial bear

15 Capote nickname

16 Difficult problem

18 Celery unit

20 Pantheon member

21 Morays

24 Twilight, poetically

28 "Bravo!"

32 Wry

33 Raw rock

34 Begets

36 Melody

37 Actress Meg

39 Maintains

41 Wheel connectors

43 Bake sale orgs.

44 — Victor

46 Dugout seating

50 Sociable and lively

55 "Caught ya!"

56 Medicinal plant

57 Vogue rival

58 Singer Phair

59 Reporter's quest

60 Workout count

61 Mimic

4 Hearts, slangily

5 Big fuss

6 Calendar abbr.

7 Advertise

8 Get cozy (with)

9 Blunder

10 Baton Rouge

11 Felon's flight

17 Eggy quaff

19 Triathlon segment

22 Secular

23 Razor sharpener

25 Algerian port

26 During

27 Red planet

28 Mrs. "Blondie"

29 African antelope

30 "Hud" actress

31 Faxed

35 Equine homes

38 Butterflies

40 Language suffix

42 High school subj.

45 Declare

47 "The Lion King" lion

48 Intel product

49 Visibility hindrance

50 Fire

51 Flamenco cheer

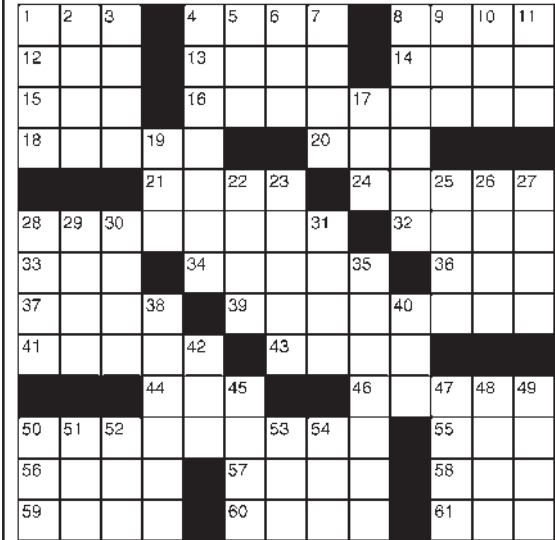
52 At once

53 — de-France

54 Jungfrau, for one

Solution time: 23 mins.

Yesterday's answer 1-5



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99c per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: January Jones, 44; Bradley Cooper, 47; Carrie Ann Inaba, 54; Diane Keaton, 76.

Happy Birthday: Reflect before you initiate change. Observing, addressing unstable or questionable issues, and considering the results you are trying to achieve will save you time and money. Eliminate confusion and take notes, and you'll get a clear picture of what's possible and how you can use resources to reach a plateau that puts your mind at ease. Your numbers are 7, 15, 22, 26, 38, 41, 44.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Surround yourself with people who share your beliefs and interests. Discuss alternatives, and be a team player. Don't get worked up over something you cannot change when there are things you can do that will make a difference. \*\*\*\*

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't step on someone's toes. Do your own thing, and leave others to their devices. Shared expenses and responsibilities will do best if handled equally to avoid a loss or an argument. Try to get along. \*\*

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Rev things up, and finish what you start. How you deal with your deadlines and responsibilities will determine how vulnerable you appear to others. Refuse to let anyone lead you astray when you have an opportunity to excel or make a difference. \*\*\*\*\*

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Live, learn and move along. Perpetual motion keeps life interesting. Explore what's available to you, and share what you find with someone

you respect. Keep your money and possessions in a safe place, and you'll avoid a cash flow problem. \*\*\*

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Put your energy into looking and feeling your best. Strive for perfection, strength and a healthy attitude, and you will get the results you want. Be yourself instead of trying to replicate what someone is doing. Trust your instincts. \*\*\*\*

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Network, socialize and do something that pumps you up and gives you the drive you require to follow through with your plans. Take a unique approach to relationships, networking and bringing about positive change, and you'll dodge an emotional bullet. \*\*\*

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Set your sights on what you want to achieve, and refuse to let anything sidetrack you. Pay attention to detail, show discipline and respect what experts contribute. Knowledge is the key to getting things done right the first time. \*\*\*\*\*

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): A sudden change based on what someone says or does will leave you in a quandary. Rely on your intuition, and you'll choose what's best for you regarding a situation that includes a friend, relative or lover, and progress will prevail. \*\*

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Let your heart lead the way. Listen, assess and look for the truth. Take responsibility for your words and actions, and refuse to let anyone take advantage of you. When in doubt, do your research and sit tight. Concentrate on per-

EUGENIA LAST THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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sonal growth. \*\*\*\* CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Ponder over what to do next. Refuse to let anyone push you in a direction you aren't ready to pursue. Stay focused on what's important to you instead of putting what others want first. Let your intuition guide you. \*\*\*

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You can enforce change. You will make a difference if you soldier up and take charge. Give vision to your thoughts, and you will attract attention. Don't count on everyone to agree with you, but the ones who do will contribute handsomely. \*\*\*

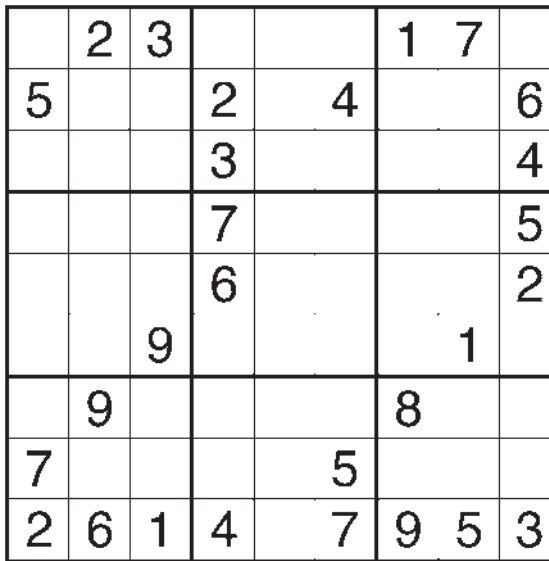
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Go over every detail before you make a move. Make sure motives are sincere and not based on revenge when dealing with someone questionable. Don't be afraid to do things on your own if necessary. Strive for a peaceful life. \*\*\* Birthday Baby: You are inquiring, friendly and unique. You are persistent and energetic.

☾: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☼: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼☼: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☼☼☼: Aim high; start new projects. ☼☼☼☼: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

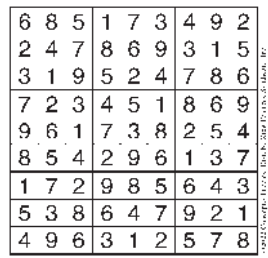


Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/05

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★★ 2/05

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

RAINY DAYS Solution: 8 letters



© 2022 Arc News/McMee Syndication www.wonderword.com 1/5 Balcony, Beach, Boat, Boots, Bucket, Climate, Cloud, Coat, Dance, Deluge, Dewy, Drizzle, Flood, Forest, Games, Garden, Gentle, Heavy, Jump, Lake, Land, Leaf, Liquid, Listen, Mist, Movie, Nature, Outside, Path, Patio, Peace, Plants, Precipitation, River, Shower, Sing, Sky, Snow, Spray, Steady, Storm, Stream, Strew, Swimsuit, Torrential, Water, Weather, Window Yesterday's Answer: Forgive Treasures 27, 28, 31 and 33 through 47 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.



# Pistons win 115-106 to snap Bucks' 6-game winning streak



**MILWAUKEE** (AP)—The Detroit Pistons owned the NBA's worst record. The Milwaukee Bucks were the defending NBA champions.

None of that mattered Monday night as Saddiq Bey scored a career-high 34 points to lift Detroit to a 115-106 victory that snapped the Bucks' six-game winning streak.

"Growing in this league is not easy, but this is an excellent step for us to take," Pistons coach Dwane Casey said.

It also enabled them to step out of the Eastern Conference basement.

The Pistons' triumph improved their record to 7-28 and moved them ahead of the Orlando Magic, who now have the NBA's worst winning percentage.

Milwaukee had won 12 consecutive regular-season matchups with the Pistons by an average margin of 16.7 points before Monday. That streak didn't include the Bucks' four-game sweep of Detroit in a 2019 first-round playoff series.

That streak ended even though the Bucks had their top three players — Giannis Antetokounmpo, Khris Middleton and Jrue Holiday — all available. This marked just the third time all season that the

Bucks have lost when they've had all three of those players in the starting lineup.

"They did a great job of just moving the ball, finding the open guy, knocking down shots, not letting us get momentum," Antetokounmpo said. "They played well. They played real well."

Milwaukee attempted to erase a 13-point deficit in the final two minutes. But after Holiday's 3-pointer narrowed the margin to five with 47.1 seconds left, Detroit's Cade Cunningham converted a putback of his own miss with 27.8 seconds remaining.

The Bucks wouldn't threaten again.

"My teammates trust me with the ball at the end of the game after missing so many games," said Cunningham, who hadn't played since Dec. 21 due to the NBA's health and safety protocols. "I appreciate them for that. I'm glad I got to make the play."

Josh Jackson, Trey Lyles, Killian Hayes, Saben Lee and Rodney McGruder also were back from protocols. Jackson had 24 points, Cunningham scored 19 and Lyles added 11.

"I thought I was going to be a little winded out there, but I didn't get as tired as I was expecting," Jackson said.

Hamidou Diallo added 11



Detroit Pistons' Saddiq Bey dunks during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Milwaukee Bucks, Monday, Jan. 3, 2022, in Milwaukee. AP

points, nine rebounds and five assists for the Pistons.

Antetokounmpo had 31 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists. Holiday scored 29. Bobby Portis had 12 points and 14 rebounds. Middleton added 10 points.

Detroit was 18 of 43 and Milwaukee shot just 11 of 46 on 3-point attempts.

"This is a big win for us, a breath of fresh air for sure," Cunningham said. "Everybody can kind of cool out and now just play their game, not think so much. When you're losing, all that other stuff is kind of amplified, all the problems you're having and whatever. When you can find ways to win, stick together through tough games and pull out a victory, everything else you can work through a lot easier."

## Trail Blazers 136, Hawks 131

In Portland, Ore., Anfernee Simons had a career-high 43 points and the Portland Trail Blazers overcame an NBA season-best 56 points by Atlanta's Trae Young, snapping a four-game losing streak in a 136-131 win over the Hawks on Monday night.

Young shot 17 for 26 from the field, 7 for 12 from 3-point distance and 15 for 15 from the line for his career-high scoring total, and added 14 assists. His 56-point game eclipsed Kevin Durant's 51-point performance for the Nets at Detroit on Dec. 12. Golden State's Stephen Curry and Boston's Jaylen Brown have had 50-point games this season.

Young became the first player with 50-plus points and 14-plus assists in a game since James Harden with the Houston Rockets on Dec. 31, 2016.

Portland starting center Jusuf Nukic had 21 points and 12 rebounds. Simons had a career-high nine 3-pointers, the most for a Portland player this season.

## Grizzlies 118, Nets 104

In New York, Ja Morant scored 36 points and five players scored in double figures as Memphis extended its winning streak to five games with a win over Brooklyn.

Desmond Bane scored 29 points, Brandon Clarke added 16, and Jarrett Culver and Tyus Jones had 12 apiece.

Kevin Durant led the Nets with 26 points on 8-for-24 shooting from the field, including 2 for 8 from 3-point range. James Harden added 19 points in 5-for-14 shooting. Nic Claxton added 11 points and Blake Griffin and Bruce Brown each finished with 10 points as Brooklyn lost its third straight.

Morant scored 18 points in the third period and had a spectacular tomahawk dunk that drew a gasp from the Barclay Center crowd of more 17,000, which included NFL wide receiver Antonio Brown, whose career is on hold after leaving the field and his Tampa Bay teammates in the Buccaneers' win over the Jets on Sunday.

## Bulls 102, Magic 98

In Chicago, DeMar DeRozan scored 29 points, Zach LaVine added 27 and Chicago beat Orlando for its eighth straight victory.

Nikola Vucevic had 13 points and 17 rebounds for the Bulls. Coby White came off the bench to score 17 points.

Franz Wagner led Orlando with 22 points. Wendell Carter Jr. finished with 21 points and 10 rebounds for the Magic,

who lost their sixth straight. Orlando has three wins since Nov. 17.

LaVine and DeRozan combined for 17 points in the third quarter, helping the Bulls hold off the Magic. Chicago last lost on Dec. 11, 118-92 to Miami.

## Warriors 115, Heat 108

In San Francisco, Jordan Poole scored 32 points, Andrewiggins added 22 points and a key driving dunk with 4:34 remaining on a quiet night for Stephen Curry, and Golden State held off undermanned Miami.

Heat star Jimmy Butler was helped off the court with 3:14 left in the third quarter after hurting his right ankle going down awkwardly. Butler had 22 points, five rebounds and three assists.

Curry had a season-low nine points.

Kyle Lowry had 16 points and 11 assists for the Heat playing in foul trouble, whistled for his fifth personal with 43.2 seconds remaining in the third. Tyler Herro scored 18 points for a Miami team down 10 players in all, five because of the COVID protocols.

## Timberwolves 122, Clippers 104

In Los Angeles, Anthony Edwards scored 28 points to lead six players in double figures and Minnesota routed Los Angeles to end a three-game skid.

The Wolves gained a split in LA after losing by five to the Lakers a night earlier.

Serge Ibaka tied his season high with 17 points for the Clippers, who have dropped four of six.

Reserves Jaylen McDaniels added 18 points and Taurean Prince had 17 points for the Wolves. Patrick Beverley tied

his career high with 12 assists against his former team.

## 76ers 133, Rockets 113

In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid had a triple-double with 31 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists, leading Philadelphia over Houston.

Furkan Korkmaz scored 24 points and Isaiah Joe had 18 points for the Sixers.

Garrison Mathews led the Rockets with 23 points.

The Rockets played without guard Kevin Porter Jr. and forward Christian Wood. They were suspended one game for bad behavior. Both had meltdowns in a loss Saturday to Denver.

## Wizards 124, Hornets 121

In Washington, Kyle Kuzma had a season-high 36 points and 14 rebounds and Bradley Beal scored 35 points in Washington's win over Charlotte.

Charlotte (19-19), which lost to Phoenix by a season-high 34 points on Sunday, was led by Gordon Hayward's 27 points. Terry Rozier scored 25 points and Miles Bridges added 23 points and a season-high 14 rebounds.

Beal again started at point guard as four others were in the NBA's health and safety protocols. He had eight assists and seven rebounds.

## Jazz 115, Pelicans 104

In New Orleans, Donovan Mitchell scored 29 points, Bojan Bogdanovic added 21, and Utah extended its road winning streak to nine games by beating New Orleans.

Rudy Gobert had 10 points and 18 rebounds for the Jazz, who led by as many as 15 points in the fourth quarter as Utah won for the seventh time in eight games.

Jonas Valanciunas had 25 points and nine assists, and Josh Hart added 15 points and nine assists for New Orleans, which dropped its second straight and lost for the third time in four games. Nickeil Alexander-Walker added 13 points in a reserve role. Brandon Ingram missed 15 of 18 shots and finished with 10 points in his return from a two-game absence caused by a sore left Achilles tendon.

## Mavericks 103, Nuggets 89

In Dallas, Luka Doncic had 21 points and matched a season high with 15 assists in Dallas' win over Denver.

Dwight Powell and Reggie Bullock added 15 points each for the Mavericks, who swept a back-to-back and matched their longest winning streak of the season at three games.

Nikola Jokic had 27 points and 16 rebounds to lead the Nuggets, who had a three-game winning streak snapped.

## After 8 years as NBA assistant, Hammon to lead team in WNBA

Becky Hammon was ready to lead her own team. So she went back to where her professional career began — the WNBA.

Hammon, an assistant with the San Antonio Spurs, will take over as the Las Vegas Aces' head coach and general manager after the NBA season concludes.

"Being the head coach of the Las Vegas Aces is a step forward and a step in the right direction for myself and for women's basketball," Hammon said. "I cannot emphasize enough the importance of this opportunity that I have. There's something to being a head coach."

Hammon has spent eight seasons as a Spurs assistant and has interviewed for several NBA head coaching jobs. But for now, her dream of becoming the first woman to lead an NBA team is on hold.

"I sat in head coaching interviews (in the NBA) and people said two things: 'You've only been in San Antonio and you've never been a head coach,'" she said. "NBA jobs are hard to get. In some ways, I feel like the NBA maybe is close. In other ways, I feel like they're a

long ways off from hiring (a woman head coach). I don't know when it could happen."

There are still a half dozen women assistant coaches in the NBA. Hammon's resume earned her plenty of respect: She will be the WNBA's highest-paid coach.

Hammon will replace Bill Laimbeer, who has been with the team since it moved to Las Vegas in 2017 and led the Aces on deep playoff runs the past three seasons, including a WNBA Finals appearance in 2020. Last season, the 64-year-old coach took a step back, letting assistant Tanisha Wright run more practices and in-game huddles. Wright left in the offseason to be the head coach of the Atlanta Dream.

"This is the organization that made it very, very obvious they wanted me really, really bad," the 44-year-old Hammon said.

The Aces finished with the second-best record in the WNBA last season at 24-8 before falling to the Phoenix Mercury in the semifinals. The franchise, looking for its first WNBA title, has a solid core led by former MVP A'ja Wilson. (AP)



# Roethlisberger, Steelers top Browns to stay in playoff mix



**PITTSBURGH**  
(AP)—Ben Roethlisberger

looked for the last time into the Heinz Field stands peppered with No. 7 jerseys bearing his name and tried to soak in a moment as inevitable as it was unimaginable for most of his career.

This is the end for the long-time Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback.

And rather than fight it, the player defined by his ability to fend off defenders with his left arm and make game-changing throws with his right embraced it.

Roethlisberger did a victory lap following a 26-14 win over Cleveland on Monday night that kept his team's faint playoff hopes alive. He hugged team president Art Rooney II. He unsuccessfully fought back tears. Then he grabbed the hand of his wife Ashley and their three children and walked into the tunnel and out of sight.

His on-field performance — 24 of 46 for 123 yards, with a touchdown and a pick — was remarkable only for its inefficiency. He became the first QB since at least 1950 to win a game with more than 40 attempts for fewer than 150 yards, according to STATS.

But the numbers — as has often been the case during an 18-year career that includes two Super Bowl victories — were beside the point.

Roethlisberger played. The Steelers won. And so it goes.

Pittsburgh (8-7-1) will finish at .500 or better for the 18th straight season, or every year since the Steelers selected Big Ben with the 11th overall pick in the 2004 draft.

"That's been the story of my career," he said. "Not always pretty, but we find a way."

The Steelers need a win over Baltimore next week and a loss by Indianapolis to lowly Jacksonville to make the postseason for the 12th time with Roethlisberger, a possibility he admits is slim.

Still, it exists, and that's thanks in large part to rookie Najee Harris, who ran for a career-best 188 yards and a touchdown, and linebacker T.J. Watt, who sacked Baker Mayfield four times to give him 21 1/2 on the season, one short of the NFL record set by Hall of Famer Michael Strahan in 2001.

Yet the night belonged to Roethlisberger. The "Let's Go Ben!" chants started immediately after he was introduced, replaced by "Thank You Ben!" after the 39-year-old took a knee in the final seconds to seal his 26th win over the team that bypassed the Ohio native in the draft nearly



Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger (7) takes the field before an NFL football game against the Cleveland Browns, Monday, Jan. 3, 2022, in Pittsburgh.

two decades ago.

"This is home, you know?" Roethlisberger said. "And I just, I know I was born in Ohio, but I live here and I'll

always be here."

The only people more eager for Roethlisberger to retire than his family might be the Browns. Cleveland (7-9)—

which was eliminated from postseason contention on Sunday—fell to 3-26-1 when facing Roethlisberger.

The Browns inexplicably

put the game on Mayfield's tattered shoulders rather than feeding running back Nick Chubb against the NFL's worst rush defense. Chubb ran

12 times for 58 yards while Mayfield threw 37 passes, completing just 16, for 185 yards with two touchdowns and two picks.

"If anyone questions how much I want it, turn on this tape," Mayfield said. "I kept swinging. That's who I am. That's who I've always been."

Mayfield plans to have surgery on his ailing left shoulder soon, though his erratic season made his long-term outlook murky for a team where instability at the position has been the norm for decades.

Things are different in Pittsburgh.

Roethlisberger was 22 when he took over for an injured Tommy Maddox in Week 2 of his rookie season. He never let go, leading the franchise to an era of success that nearly rivaled the Super Steelers of the 1970s.

Roethlisberger finally admitted this week that "all signs" were pointing to his 18th season being his last. His tank might be running low, but it's not empty, and he showed flashes — briefly, anyway — of his "Ben being Ben" prime.

A shoulder fake here. A step up in the pocket there. The feet don't move as fast as they used to. His arm doesn't deliver with the precision of the past. The field-stretching heaves have been largely replaced by dinks and dunks designed in part to protect him behind an offensive line that isn't nearly as talented as the groups he led to the postseason with regularity.

Yet if there's been one constant during Roethlisberger's career, it's been his mastery of the Browns.

Roethlisberger's last win over Cleveland provided a small measure of revenge less than a year after he threw four interceptions in a first-round home playoff loss to the Browns last January.

That night was supposed to be the launching point for Cleveland heading into 2021. But injuries and inconsistent play from Mayfield among others will force the Browns to watch the playoffs from home for the 18th time in the last 19 years.

Not so for Pittsburgh, which heads into the finale of the NFL's first 17-game season with something to play for.

"We've got another game," Roethlisberger said. "We've got to keep fighting."

Same as it ever was.

Browns lost CB Greedy Williams in the first half to a shoulder injury and LB Sione Takitaki to a shoulder injury in the second half. CB Denzel Ward exited in the third quarter with a groin issue, further depleting a secondary already missing starting safeties Ronnie Harrison and John Johnson.

## Eagles put 12 on COVID-19 list with playoff spot in hand

The Philadelphia Eagles have placed defensive tackle Fletcher Cox and tight end Dallas Goedert along with 10 others on the reserve/COVID-19 list Monday ahead of Saturday's regular-season finale against Dallas.

The Eagles (9-7) already have a playoff berth clinched with only the seeding still to be decided Saturday night when they host the Cowboys (11-5) as either the sixth or seventh seed in the NFC. Under the NFL's revised COVID-19 protocols, the Eagles could get all 12 back before kickoff.

Joining Cox and Goedert on the reserve list are linebackers Genard Avery and Alex Singleton, safeties Marcus Epps and Rodney McLeod, guard Nate Herbig, running backs Jordan Howard and Boston Scott, center Jason Kelce, cornerback Avonte Maddox and tight end Jack Stoll.

Philadelphia got one player back from the COVID-19 list, activating cornerback Andre Chachere.

The Denver Broncos (7-9), who lost to the Chargers on Sunday without several

starters, placed kicker Brandon McManus and punter Sam Martin on the virus list Monday. Both could return for the season finale Saturday against Kansas City.

McManus kicked a 61-yard field goal in Denver's 34-13 loss to the Chargers, the longest road field goal in franchise history.

The Tennessee Titans (11-5), who could clinch the AFC's No. 1 seed with a win Sunday in Houston, activated wide receiver Julio Jones, linebacker Jayon Brown and reserve offensive lineman Kendall Lamm. The Titans got a roster exemption for Lamm with the roster currently at 54.

The Titans also got defensive back Brian Boddy-Calhoun back on the practice squad from the COVID-19 list. They put offensive lineman Paul Adams onto the practice squad's reserve/COVID-19 list, the only player in that category from the Titans' most-recent COVID-19 outbreak.

The eliminated Minnesota Vikings placed five more players, including four starters, on the COVID-19

reserve list: backup safety Camryn Bynum, left guard Ezra Cleveland, left tackle Christian Darrisaw, linebacker Eric Kendricks and right tackle Brian O'Neill. They'll be eligible to be cleared in time for the meaningless final game against Chicago if they're asymptomatic.

Quarterback Kirk Cousins and linebacker Nick Vigil, who had to sit out Sunday night's 37-10 loss at Green Bay on COVID-19 reserve, also could return this week. The Vikings have had 29 players placed on the COVID-19 reserve list over the past nine weeks.

Green Bay (13-3) put Dennis Kelly, who has started the past three games at right tackle, and starting safety Darnell Savage on the COVID-19 list. They moved practice squad receiver David Moore onto the COVID-19 list with linebacker Chauncey Rivers switched off the COVID-19 list to injured reserve.

The 49ers placed cornerbacks K'Waun Williams and Dontae Johnson and safety Jimmie Ward along with injured running back Raheem

Mostert on the COVID-19 list. Coach Kyle Shanahan said he hopes to be able to get Williams and Johnson back in time to play Sunday's finale against the Rams.

Detroit put both starting offensive tackles on the COVID-19 list in left tackle Taylor Decker and right tackle Penei Sewell along with starting linebacker Austin Bryant. The Lions also put Rodney Smith on the practice squad's COVID-19 reserve list.

The Lions got four back from the COVID-19 list, activating receiver Josh Reynolds, defensive end Michael Brockers, tight end Brock Wright and starting right guard Halapoulivaati Vaitai.

The Houston Texans, who host Tennessee on Sunday, put starting safety Justin Reid onto the COVID-19 list.

Cincinnati (10-6) moved cornerback Darius Phillips and receiver Auden Tate from the COVID-19 list back to injured reserve.

The Raiders activated backup linebackers Will Compton and Patrick Onwuasor from the COVID-19 list. (AP)



# Bucs coach: Antonio Brown didn't claim injury before walkoff



**TAMPA, Fla.** (AP)—Antonio Brown's latest messy departure from an NFL team, the Buccaneers, was not about an injury, coach Bruce Arians said Monday.

Yes, the Buccaneers are moving on from Brown, whose NFL career is on hold yet again after another in a series of incidents, including two women accusing him of sexual assault in 2019.

But Arians dispelled the notion that Brown stormed off the field Sunday—tossing some of his gear into the stands and waving to fans at the Jets' MetLife Stadium—after refusing to go back in because of an ankle injury that had sidelined him for several weeks.

Twice, Arians was asked about Brown claiming he was hurt. Both times, the coach answered “No,” that Brown didn't tell him he was injured.

“It's pretty obvious what happened. He left the field and that was it,” Arians said, declining to elaborate on an exchange the coach said he had with the receiver on the sideline.

Pressed for details on what was said and whether Brown claimed he was too injured to play, Arians replied: “We had a conversation and he left the field.”

Asked what specifically was said that might move Brown to react the way he did, the coach added: “You have to ask him, brother. I don't have a clue.”

“I just hope the best for

him,” Arians said, while shedding little light on what led to Brown taking off his jersey, shoulder pads, undershirt and gloves before walking off during the third quarter of Sunday's 28-24 Tampa Bay victory.

Arians added he has no regrets about giving the often-troubled receiver an opportunity to play with Tom Brady and revive a career derailed by on- and off-the-field issues—even though it ended in such a bizarre fashion. Tampa Bay was Brown's third team since his last full season in the NFL with the Pittsburgh Steelers in 2018.

The 33-year-old Brown also had messy departures from Oakland and New England—released before ever playing a game for the Raiders and then suiting up just once during a brief stay with the Brady-led Patriots in 2019.

“I wish him well. I hope if he needs help, get some,” said Arians, who was Pittsburgh's offensive coordinator when the Steelers drafted Brown in the sixth round in 2010. “It's very hard because I do care about him.”

Brown remained in the New York area, sitting courtside Monday night at the Brooklyn Nets' loss to the Memphis Grizzlies.

Brown hadn't played in the NFL in more than 13 months when he signed with the Bucs in October 2020 as he neared the end of an eight-game suspension for multiple violations of the NFL's personal conduct



Tampa Bay Buccaneers wide receiver Antonio Brown wipes his face as he leaves the field after throwing his equipment into the stands while his team is on offense during the third quarter of an NFL football game against the New York Jets, Sunday, Jan. 2, 2022, **AP**

policy. At the time, Brown was also facing a civil lawsuit filed in September 2019 by a female personal trainer who accused him of sexually assaulting her on three occasions, including rape.

“I took a lot of time off from the game to re-evaluate myself, to look within, to get a better perspective of myself and work on myself within and without,” Brown said in November 2020.

Brady welcomed Tampa Bay's decision to give Brown a chance and allowed the four-time All Pro to stay with him

in a home the quarterback was renting from baseball Hall of Famer Derek Jeter.

“I won't say I'm a different person, but I'm a better person,” Brown said then. “Learning a lot about myself, working on myself for a year and a half, I think I'm a better person.”

Several members of Arians' staff in Tampa Bay, including offensive coordinator Byron Leftwich, also worked with Brown early in the receiver's career. Brown said he felt those relationships would help him make the most of the opportunity.

For a while, it worked.

Brown had 45 receptions for 483 yards and four TDs over the final eight games of last season. He also contributed during the playoffs and caught a TD pass in the Bucs' Super Bowl win over Kansas City.

He signed another one-year deal last May and was off to a strong start when he was sidelined with the ankle injury at Philadelphia in mid-October.

Brown returned to the lineup two weeks ago after serving a three-game suspension for misrepresenting his COVID-19 vaccination status

with a fake card, and had 10 catches for 101 yards in a win over Carolina.

He had three reception for 26 yards against the Jets, finishing the season with 42 catches for 545 yards and four TDs.

An impressive streak of six consecutive seasons with at least 100 catches and 1,000 yards receiving ended when Brown's erratic behavior on and off the field led Pittsburgh to trade him to Oakland in March 2019.

A tumultuous short stay with the Raiders ended with Brown demanding and being granted his release during training camp. By that time, the Raiders had voided guaranteed money in Brown's contract after a summer with the team began with Brown, among other things, missing a number of practices because of frost-bitten feet attributed to not wearing proper footwear during a cryotherapy session.

He also tangled with the NFL and threatened to retire if forced to wear a new helmet. He later was fined by the Raiders for what the team said were unexcused absences during camp.

Brown also had an ugly departure from New England after catching four passes for 56 yards and a touchdown in his only game with the Patriots, which released him after the ex-trainer accused him of sexual assault.

## JR LIBUT

From Page 20

Trophies were also given to pennant champions Kio, best offensive team Devil Dog Warriors, and best defensive team Kio. Of course, Rampage, Kio, and Team CNMI also went home with their championship, runner-up, and third place trophies. Rampage ended Kio's 14-game winning streak after upsetting them in the finals, 56-51, last Wednesday at the Tinian Youth Center.

The three cagebells that suited up in the 2021 season—Regina Palacios, Eleina Santos, and Ria Borja—also were given medals by TABA. Ditto for the three volunteer referees—Jimmy Rios, Tristan Senter, and Braden Harvey.

TABA president Christopher SN King also gave plaques of appreciation to Tinian Mayor Edwin Aldan, MARPAC, the 7th Engineer Support Battalion, and RNV Construction for their sponsorship of the league.

Last but not the least, TASA gave fan Inday Anacita Palmitos Vergara the perfect attendance award.

King also extended his appreciation to TABA officials for running the league despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I am so thankful for my TABA officers Principia Monkeya, Thealanie M. Atalig, Isa K. Reyes, Josean “Bear” Alvarez, Anissa M. DLC, Tano SN King II, Christopher SN King Jr. And Pritzel A. Carreon, Dawn Sarmiento, Tristan Senter, Jimmy Rios, Braden Harvey, Antony Gunny, Elder Barrow, and Elder Taylor. This league wouldn't have been possible without their contributions,” he said.

He also thanked the Tinian Department of Community and Cultural Affairs staff, the U.S. Marines, Kai Lizama, Ailia Dela Cruz, Robin Reyes, Melthon Atalig, and 3K Store for all their support.

The TABA president said he is already looking forward to staging the 2022 edition of the Island-wide Men's Bud Light Basketball League.

“I will see after all these holidays are done I might start another basketball league. I think this time I will include players 18 years and younger, but it's not confirmed yet,” said King.



Run Saipan secretary/treasurer Ron Snyder, left, poses with rest of the club's officers, from left, vice president Jiayi Kong, president Edward Dela Cruz Jr., and board members Tania Tan and Robin Sapong. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**

## ‘DOC’

From Page 20

injury, you can still do short, slow runs while you recover.

Being on Saipan is a great place to be a streak runner. The heat definitely inhibits your ability to peak but it also means that there is no weather

that you can't run in...if you are willing to get a bit wet at times,” he said.

Snyder celebrated his one-year running streak

last Dec. 30 but he's not about to stop there.

“I knew I wanted to run for the entire 2021 but I actually started my streak on Dec. 30 on Rota. I completed a full year on a 5K run in Great Falls National Park, just outside of Virginia but I haven't finished my streak. My goal now is to make a ‘comma’ or 1,000 days.”

He said aside from his family's help he wouldn't have completed his first 365 days of non-stop running without Dela Cruz, who this month will be celebrating his fourth year of running at least 1 mile a day.

“I would like to dedicate the streak to my family for joining me on so many virtual challenges and to Ed Dela Cruz Jr for always being supportive in my journey.”

Snyder also serves as secretary and treasurer of Run Saipan.

## NMIVA

From Page 20

a junior tournament and the Kids Cup held in the Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival

Under the Marianas Cup concept pushed by the Northern Marianas Sports Association, CNMI teams will challenge Guam teams every year.

NMSA has so far floated four options on how the Marianas Cup would proceed. The first option would be Guam hosting as much as 18 sports. The second option is the CNMI will take the hosting duties. The third is the CNMI and Guam will split the sports with half taking place in the latter and the other half in the

former. The fourth, which Tan concedes is the most doable, is individual sports will arrange their respective Marianas Cup events against their counterpart sports federations in Guam.

NMSA president Jerry Tan said the genesis of the Marianas Cup idea came about following the postponement of the 2022 Micronesian

Games. He said a lot of athletes training for the 2022 Games in the Marshall Islands would effectively have to wait another year to compete in a regional event.

The Marianas Cup, Tan said, would give athletes the impetus to train year-round because they always have a yearly competition to look forward to.





**Pistons win 115-106 to snap Bucks' 6-game winning streak** **PAGE 17**

# Saipan Tribune Sports



**Bucs coach: Antonio Brown didn't claim injury before walkoff** **PAGE 19**

20 WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2022

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

## 'Doc' now wants to complete a 'comma'

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Add Saipan International School headmaster Dr. Ron Snyder to the exclusive list of streak runners in the CNMI.

Snyder, who is also the distance running coach of Northern Marianas Athletics, said he returned to active running in the later part of 2019.

"In October 2019, Northern Marianas Athletics sent me to New Zealand for the Level 3 Middle and Long Distance Coaches Course. While there, I learned a tremendous amount and was introduced to an amazing group of coaches throughout Oceania. They inspired me to kick up my coaching game but also to get back into running myself," he said.

The 55-year-old Auburn, New York native said the onset of the COVID-19 then led SIS to co-sponsor the Run The Marianas virtual challenge.

"My family formed a team and had a blast. We followed this up with some virtual challenges and I started to realize what a running journal should look like. It was also about this time that I got to know Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. who is an avid streak runner. I thought about it for a while and then thought I would give this a try myself," he said.

### JR Libut, Walker lead individual awardees

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR



FPA Power Builders' J.R. Libut and Wesley Walker of champion team Rampage led the individual awardees of the recently concluded Island-wide Men's Bud Light Basketball League.

Libut was hailed MVP of the regular season after leading the entire league in scoring and rebounding with averages of 21.6 points and 6.5 rebounds per game.

Walker, meanwhile, had a monster game in the one-game finals against erstwhile undefeated Team Kio after the versatile center had 18 points, 11 rebounds, and 6 assists en route to winning the finals MVP plum.

Other players who were bestowed their awards by the organizing Tinian Amateur Basketball Association were Rampage playing coach Leo Pascua (most 3-pointers with 52), Devil Dog Warriors' Damon Kada (most assists with 80), and the Top 5 scorers Pascua (254 points), Rampage's Jayron Epity (260 points), Kio's Robert Reyes



Saipan International School headmaster Dr. Ron Snyder, seen here running with his dog Giligan, is the latest streak runner from Saipan. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**

"I started to realize what a running journal should look like. It was also about this time that I got to know Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. who is an avid streak runner. I thought about it for a while and

then thought I would give this a try myself," he said.

Snyder started conservatively with 1-mile-a-days before kicking it up a notch as the weeks and months piled up.

"The minimum distance for the streak is 1 mile, but once I started the 100 Days of Running Challenge out of India, I kicked it up to 2 kilometers a day. The longest distance I did was a 15K run."

The hardest part of keeping the run streak alive came in the first two months, according to him.

"The initial thrill had worn off but I still had a long way to go to make my year. I did a lot of virtual challenges along the way and this helped break up the year. It also allowed me to run with my family across the world. My wife is here with me on Saipan but my oldest daughter is in Charlotte and my youngest is in Scotland."

Snyder said there's a lot of adjustments when you decide to take on the run streak challenge. First and foremost is the length of your runs.

"I think you need to realize that you need to run a bit differently if you don't have the ability to take time off for recovery. So, it is very important to increase mileage slowly and to listen to your body and go down to the lowest mileage when you need to. Unless it is a serious

See 'DOC' on Page 19

## NMIVA warms up to 'Marianas Cup' idea

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR



The Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association appears to be agreeable to the idea of launching a CNMI-Guam competition patterned after the Marianas Cup for all sports.

"In years prior and for a number of years, we had a premier beach volleyball event called the Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival that was held on Saipan and Guam. In addition to local talent from our region, professional beach volleyball players would fly to compete in this tournament," said NMIVA president Somia Quan.

The NMIVA head said the Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival did a lot in growing the sport of volleyball in the Commonwealth.

"While they were here, they'd host clinics for the community. So, I think it's a great idea to make this happen as it gives our athletes another opportunity to compete in addition to the quadrennial competitions like Micronesian Games and Pacific Games," she added.

Officially sanctioned by the Fé-



Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association president Somia Quan takes part in drills during a recent volleyball clinic at the Agape Gymnasium. **MARK RABAGO**

dération Internationale de Volleyball since 2008, NMIVA held its last Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival in 2015.

A combination of events that spans the generations and abilities of players, the last year of event saw only

See NMIVA on Page 19

FPA Power Builders' J.R. Libut, left, and Rampage's Wesley Walker won the regular season MVP and the finals MVP, respectively, of the recently concluded Island-wide Men's Bud Light Basketball League. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**

(270 points), Devil Dog Warriors' Jake Montgomery (293 points), and Libut (303 points).

See JR LIBUT on Page 19